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OPINION METER

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Mitt Romney routs Newt Gingrich in the Florida primary.

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AFTER MONTHS OF NOT BEING PAID:

Repairs and maintenance of hospital equipment stopped

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Equipment repair and maintenance at the Commonwealth Health Center came to a screeching halt early this month following the failure of the cash-strapped healthcare corporation to pay its vendor.

Saipan Tribune learned yesterday that Pacific Biomedical Services Inc., which has been maintaining the hospital's equipment for more than a decade now, put on hold all their services effective Jan. 15 until the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is able to come up with a payment plan.

A copy of the company's contract shows that CHC pays the company about \$20,000

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'Fund is no place for political consultants'



By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Former lieutenant governor and speaker Diego Benavente, now a Commonwealth Retirees Association director, said yesterday that the NMI Retirement Fund should not be a place for "political consultants" like

former speaker Heinz Hofschneider, whom the Fund wants to hire as a consultant for \$70,000 a year.

"First of all, I don't know who the governor is trying to kid when he said he had no idea that the Fund board was considering hiring Heinz," Benavente told Saipan Tribune.

Benavente said he welcomed Gov.

Benigno R. Fitial's decision to tap former governor Juan N. Babauta to become chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. because Babauta, he said, has the qualifications and background to run CHC.

He said that's not the case with Hofschneider, who is about to be

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Zoning board slams 'massive changes' to 2008 zoning law

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Zoning Board and its staff staged a walk-out in the middle of a Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation session on Tuesday to express disappointment and dismay over the passage of a local bill that makes major changes on the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

Zoning Board chair Diego C. Blanco said the "additional massive amendments" to the law were done "without prior consultation with the zoning office or the communities islandwide."

The delegation approved by a 10-4 vote the additional amendments introduced by Rep.

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**\$500 FIRE CODE PERMIT,
\$500 RE-INSPECTION FEE**

Businesses say they are being made to pay now

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Restaurants, schools, car rentals, tire shops, poker parlors, clinics, and all other types of small to large businesses have started paying \$500 for an annual

Fire Code Permit and \$500 in fire safety re-inspection fee since December and January, contrary to Commonwealth Fire Division chief Thomas Manglona's statement to the media that none of these fees have already been assessed.

Some businesses showed Saipan Tribune yesterday copies of their receipts and permits as proof of their payments.

Fire safety inspectors have been visiting busi-

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► **Other newly
'adopted' fees
to take effect
Feb. 10 unless
rescinded**



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Local

Materials scientist says Garapan fire was intentional

» Investigator found trail of fabrics with gasoline on the floor

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

A materials scientist from Malaysia testified yesterday that based on his investigation of the fire that engulfed BL Clothing Store in Garapan in 2010, he was able to conclude that it was intentionally set off.

According to Yu Ong Sing, at least four areas in the building were set on fire. He also corroborated local firefighters' opinion that an explosion occurred at the clothing store.

Yu, who is employed by the Kuala Lumpur-based Forensic Services, testified yesterday in the ongoing jury trial of First-

Net's lawsuit against Zhen Rui Brother Corp., the owner of the store. He has investigated over 220 fires and explosions throughout Malaysia, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Guam. He is certified by the National Association of Fire Investigators in the United States.

FirstNet hired Yu to investigate the fire that occurred at BL Clothing Store in the early morning hours of Oct. 30, 2010.

Fire policy insurer FirstNet is suing Zhen Rui Brother Corp., owner of BL Clothing Store, for

allegedly deliberately setting off the fire so that the owner could claim \$404,718.53 in insurance proceeds.

Zhen Rui Brother Corp. filed a countersuit against FirstNet, alleging breach of contract, breach of implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing, insurance bad faith, and unfair or deceptive business practices.

Yu said that he conducted his investigation on Nov. 5 and 6, 2010. He identified several photos that he took at the scene showing trails of fabrics that



Yu Ong Sing

connect to other areas in the building.

He said he could smell gasoline from the fabrics as well as on the floor after he cleared or removed items from the areas where he focused his investigation.

Yu said he found out that roll of fabrics were laid out on the floor. He also disclosed that he recovered a candle, a plastic cap, and samples of gasoline that he all brought to a Malaysia laboratory for analysis.

Yu said that when a structure is intentionally burned, there's usually evidence of low level burning because a person would start the fire at a lower portion of an area. Yu said this was the situation with BL Clothing Store.

He said he noticed the rolls of fabrics that were arranged on the floor, which he found to be unusual.

When asked by attorney Richard W. Pierce, counsel for FirstNet, as to the purpose of the fabric trail on the floor, Yu said it was arranged there so the fire would spread from one location to another.

"Definitely gasoline was introduced to the fabrics because I could smell them," he said.

When shown a photograph of a distorted wall in the building, Yu explained that this

indicates that there was an explosion. He said the wall was upwardly displaced.

Yu said that when a closed place is very hot and oxygen is suddenly introduced—for example, when a door is opened—

an explosion will follow.

Yu said that he talked with Zheng Biao, the owner of the store, in the course of his investigation and that Biao told him that burglars had broken into the

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Fund defers action on credit union's refinancing request

The NMI Retirement Fund board deferred any action on the refinancing request of the Commonwealth Government Employees' Credit Union during its meeting Friday.

The board put off any decision on the matter after learning that there has been no further development since the credit union made its request to the Fund.

Fund board chair Sixto K. Igisomar said the deferment was reached after consulting with their legal counsel. Igisomar turned over the matter to administrator Richard Villagomez and his deputy, Esther Ada, to work with the credit union.

The Fund loaned the union \$2 million in 1996.

The union recently asked the Fund for a refinancing package—

an additional \$500,000 loan at a lower interest rate—to be able to expand and continue its services to its clients. The union cited revenue losses it incurred as the rea-

son for its request.

Due to the lack of details and more information about the union's financial standing, the board had instructed the Fund's management to conduct an analysis before any action is taken on the matter. The board recorded no further development on this issue as no meetings have taken place between parties since the first board instruction.






Fund officials earlier disclosed that the credit union has been diligently paying its monthly obligation for the \$2 million loan and it was not until recently that it fell behind in its payments due to a significant drop in its revenue. The credit union did not disclose its revenue losses in its Dec. 15 letter to the Fund.

The union pays roughly \$10,000 a month to the Fund. More than half of the obligation has been paid. (*Moneth Deposa*)

How do I know I'm pregnant?

Most women don't suspect they are pregnant until they miss a period, and a few don't suspect or believe they are pregnant for months after conception. During this time you are missing valuable prenatal care.

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-  **Missed Period:** Missing your period is the most noticeable sign of pregnancy. But it is not the only cause, as stress or other factors may cause irregular periods.
-  **Frequent Trips to the Bathroom:** Even before missing a period, most pregnant women report having to go to the bathroom more often.
-  **Fatigue:** Being tired is a very early sign of pregnancy.
-  **Morning (and Noon and Night!) Sickness:** That queasy feeling isn't limited to mornings. Most pregnant women who experience morning sickness feel slightly nauseated and may have vomiting at other times during the day as well.
-  **Sore (and Enlarged) Breasts:** If you're pregnant, your breasts may become tender to the touch, similar to the way they feel before your period, only more so.

If you have any of the above symptoms or suspect you are pregnant, come to the clinic for a pregnancy test as soon as possible! Don't wait!

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MOUs for public schools' power debt approved

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission has adopted the memoranda of understanding proposed by the utilities corporation pertaining to the collection of unpaid power

obligations of the CNMI Public School System.

Lone commissioner Viola Alepuyo made the decision during the commission's last meeting on Friday where she approved two separate MOUs: one between the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and PSS

and the other between the same parties and the administration.

Both MOUs relate to the unpaid utility obligation of the school system, a portion of was absorbed by the central gov-

ernment in exchange for the schools' unremitted budget allotments for fiscal year 2011.

"The memoranda of understanding between CUC, the CNMI government, and the

PSS are approved, subject to the condition that they are not materially amended," stated Alepuyo in her order.

CUC earlier reported that PSS owes \$3.7 million in power and water bills as of November 2011. It was initially agreed that the government will absorb \$1.5

million of this obligation while the remaining amount will be shouldered by the system.

According to CUC, the Fitial administration has committed to paying it a minimum of \$50,000 weekly with no interest. Three payments have already been

See MOUS on Next Page

NMC saves \$50K by letting staff teach at least one class

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College projects to save about \$50,000 in personnel costs after letting qualified staffers and employees teach at least one class this spring semester.

NMC president Sharon Y. Hart told *Saipan Tribune* that 24 courses in various programs are now being taught by these staff members without any added cost to the college.

She explained that employees who at a minimum obtained a bachelor's degree or higher were asked to use some of their weekly 40-hour schedule to teach a class.

An employee, for example, who is qualified to teach classes can use five hours of their 40 hours weekly schedule to teach. In case of staffers who are able to teach more than one class, a new schedule is being worked out with their managers.

This move arose out of the college's limited budget for operations this fiscal year and in anticipation of more financial challenges this year.

In December, staffers who signed up to teach some classes at the college went through a weeklong workshop where they were given the necessary training.

Hart assured that the quality

of education and services at the college will still be maintained, citing the qualifications, credentials, and skills being required of these additional "instructors," who all must have a bachelor's degree at a minimum.

Besides maximizing the capabilities of exiting employees, Hart said this action also saves the college a substantial amount of time and money. "This is not costing us additional money, but saving us money. We're calling this as a creative way of saving for our college."

As an added benefit, staffers are being exposed to teaching, which opens new opportunities for them.

NMC pays instructors with bachelor's degrees \$500 per credit workload and \$700 per credit for those with master's degree.

NMC's effort to hire more instructors is being hampered by the limited funding and resources it has every fiscal year. This year, the Legislature gave it just \$5.1 million, of which \$3.9 million will be used for personnel while \$1.2 million will go to all others and operation.

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SCIENTIST

From Page 2

store a few months before the fire, using the back door.

Biao allegedly told him that he placed additional locks on the doors and also bought fire insurance.

During cross-examination by Biao attorney Michael Dotts, Yu admitted that he did not give the candle or other pieces of evidence he collected to the Department of Public Safety.

"Our main business is to deter-

mine the cause of fire," Yu said.

Fire Lt. Kevin Aldan, who also took the witness stand yesterday, expressed belief that there was an explosion at the store due to gasoline.

During cross-examination by Zhen Rui Brother counsel, Ramon Quichocho, Aldan said he took a container that was found at the scene to the Fire Station on Capital Hill and eventually submitted it to the DPS evidence custodian.

Aldan admitted that he disposed of the liquid found inside the container.

When asked why he threw away the liquid, Aldan replied, "We cannot keep it."

Aldan said he submitted the container to DPS on Aug. 10, 2011, about 10 months after the fire.

Aldan agreed with Quichocho that he never took a sample from the container to determine whether it was gasoline.

Aldan also agreed with Quichocho that the container was either sitting in the garage of the Capital Hill Fire Station or in the office.

Aldan said that when he ar-

rived at the scene he could smell gasoline.

When *Saipan Tribune* left the courtroom yesterday afternoon, Daniel M. Manuel, a claims manager for the Guam-based Equitable Adjusting & Service Co., was on the witness stand.

Manuel, a FirstNet witness, was the one who hired Yu at FirstNet's instruction to investigate the suspicious fire at BL Clothing Store.

Manuel said he and Yu arrived at the same time on Saipan from Guam. He said he could smell gasoline at the scene.

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'No guarantee of austerity exemption unless justified'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has yet to decide on U.S. Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta's request to exempt two Interior-funded programs from austerity measures, adding that no other federal agencies have asked the same exemption.

"If there are concerns, then it should be addressed to the Governor

for review and consideration. There's no guarantee at this point that the governor will be approving requests as it will be based on the justification," Demapan said.

Babauta had asked Fitial in a letter to exempt the Brown Tree Snake Interdiction Program and the Coral Reef Protection Program from austerity measures, particularly the 16-hour cuts biweekly, to avoid economic and ecological problems.

Besides his Jan. 25 letter, Babauta also personally met with the governor and

other CNMI officials during his visit to Saipan from Saturday to Tuesday.

In December 2010, Babauta made a similar request to exempt the Brown Tree Snake Interdiction Program from austerity measures.

Demapan said those personnel were exempted last fiscal year, along with other federally funded personnel in other agencies.

Babauta said the brown tree snake poses a significant ongoing economic and ecological threat to the Commonwealth that is preventable, in part,

through the governor's actions. He also underscored the importance of protecting coral reefs for economic and ecological reasons.

Because of worsening financial problems, the governor subjected all executive departments and agencies

to 16-hour work cuts per pay period, covering local and federally funded personnel. Only certain personnel at the departments of Public Safety and Corrections and the Emergency Management Office are exempted from the 16-hour work cuts.

ZONING

From Page 1

Stanley Torres in House Local Bill 17-26. The bill now heads to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial for enactment.

Zoning officials described the amendments as "inconsistent with zoning principles and have been rejected by the public."

"We believe we tried our best to amend the law to make it more workable for the public, but Congressman Torres' amendments being snuck back into the new law is beyond anyone's comprehension," said Blanco.

Although the Legislature has the authority to amend the zoning law, Blanco noted that lawmakers also need to understand "that the Zoning office was established to administer it and had worked very hard to provide recommendations for the amendments based on sound zoning and planning principles."

According to Blanco, he and acting Zoning administrator Therese T. Ogu-moro gave oral and written pleadings to adopt the proposed amendments based on input from public hearings

and the review of the Zoning office.

"It is very discouraging to know that, after all these years of presenting to them our findings and recommendations for a much improved zoning law for this island, they still managed to turn their backs," said Blanco. "What more do they want? To take over the administration function of zoning? They need to come out straight and let us know now."

He also accused lawmakers of disregarding over the years the explanations that they provided them regarding zoning regulations and principles.

"I tried my best to work with legislators to support us in making a better zoning law and thought we had an understanding about that, but it's very obvious now that there was never any," added Blanco.

Ogu-moro, for her part, said that the Zoning board and staff, including their legal counsel, exhausted all efforts "in coming up with a new and much improved law" that she felt Torres and the nine lawmakers still failed to see.

"The outcome was very unreasonable and hard to describe," said Ogu-moro. "All of the technical and difficult works which were guided by careful

planning and zoning guidelines for over two years went down the drain within just a few minutes."

According to Ogu-moro, they offered to work with Torres' additional amendments to be presented to the public and reviewed again for subsequent amendments to the law, asking lawmakers to pass the proposed law as submitted by the board, "to no avail."

"I hope the lawmakers get a chance to see the impact their actions would have on this entire island. It is just equivalent to having no zoning at all," she said.

Both Ogu-moro and Blanco acknowledged delegation chair Ray Tebuteb, Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogu-moro, Reps. Rey Basa and Edmund Villagomez for voting to support the law as proposed by Zoning.

"The public needs to know who strongly supported a law that was improved through the input and participation of business communities and residents for the benefit of the general public and not just a few," added Blanco.

Torres refused to comment on the matter, saying that he will do so once the bill is signed into law by the governor.

FUND

From Page 1

awarded a sole-source contract by the Fund. He said Hofschneider, whom he thinks has a medical/health education background, could be more qualified to work at CHC rather than the Fund.

"The Fund board chair's justification was that Heinz was passionate about helping the Fund. That is hard to believe. I realize the Legislature or the administration does not have the money to hire Heinz, but we all thought the Retirement Fund also does not have money.

The Fund could use the \$70,000 to help pay the benefits of retirees," said Benavente.

The CRA director hopes that the Fund board will reconsider its decision to hire Hofschneider. Benavente was Babauta's lieutenant governor.

During the 2009 elections, Hofschneider as a Republican standard bearer, won the initial popular vote against Covenant Party's Fitial. But Hofschneider failed to gain a majority, resulting in a runoff against the incumbent, Fitial, who won by 370 votes and was re-elected. Fitial went back to the Republican Party in 2011 and became its president again.

REPAIRS

From Page 1

a year to repair and maintain the hospital's equipment, except for the hemodialysis units.

Sources disclosed that the company was last paid in September 2011, which would mean that payments have been delayed for about four months now.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments yesterday from the corporation's chief executive officer, Juan N. Babauta, but he did not respond by press time.

In the past 15 years that PBSI has served CHC, sources said this is the first time the company suspended its services after failing to receive any word from the corporation.

PBSI is a locally owned company. According to sources, it is not demanding full payment of the obligation but is seeking an arrangement and negotiation with the corporation.

According to the company's website, it is primarily engaged in repairing and maintaining electronic and precision equipment such as medical diagnostic imaging equipment, measuring and surveying instruments, laboratory instruments, and radar and sonar equipment.

Hospital employees interviewed by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday disclosed that because of the temporary stoppage of PBSI's services, they fear that this would lead to more serious problems.

They shared that on a daily basis, "biomed" from the company usually do the rounds in all units and sections of the hospital to monitor all equipment, including EKG machines, cardiac monitoring machine, and blood-pressure apparatus, among others.

CHC employees emphasized the importance of this maintenance service as it prevents "wrong and inaccurate" diagnosis.

PBSI is only one of the many service providers at the hospital that are experiencing delays in their collections of payments. In an earlier interview with Babauta, he estimated the unpaid obligation to hospital vendors at over a \$1 million as of January 2012.

The corporation was allocated only \$5 million in seed capital this fiscal year. It has already asked the Legislature for more funding but there has been no action on this yet.

The lack of funds is also hampering the corporation's efforts to hire more people, buy enough supplies, and address other immediate needs at the hospital.

BUSINESSES

From Page 1

nesses on Saipan since December, checking whether their premises comply with fire safety codes and telling them to secure a Fire Code Permit, among other things.

What's worse is that the \$500 Fire Code Permit and \$500 re-inspection fee are separate from all other fines and fees that DPS-Fire Division proposed—as early as August 2011—to be increased from just \$20 to a whopping \$100, \$500, \$1,000, and \$10,000.

"How can they say they're not asking for payment of these permits and fees yet when a lot of us have already paid? They're lying. We've been visited several times," QQ Car Rental owner James Han said. Their permit was issued on Jan. 11, 2012, and will expire on Jan. 11, 2013.

Michael Berglund, principal at Seventh-Day Adventist Child Development Center, also said they paid \$500 for a Fire Code Permit that was issued on Jan. 18, 2012, and expires on Jan. 18, 2013.

Jim Gebhardt of Pacific Amusement also confirmed paying \$500 for the Fire Code Permit and \$500 for re-inspection fee. Other smaller businesses also said they paid a total of \$1,000 for these two items.

The Department of Public Safety's Commonwealth Fire Division said that Public Law 11-56 allows for such permit and fee, but it was not fully implemented until recently.

While many affected businesses support fire safety inspections and would like to comply with inspection findings, they said DPS could have done a better job by properly educating the public about the \$500 permit and \$500 re-inspection fee.

Moreover, spending an additional \$1,000 is just "too much" during these tough economic times when businesses are barely surviving.

Affected businesses, including those in the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that they support having CNMI fire safety codes and rules to be at par with national and international standards. But they said imposing steep fees and fines is not a good way to do it.

Separate fines and fees

Under DPS-Fire Division's proposal, fees of mostly \$20 will go up to \$100, \$500, \$1,000, and \$10,000. The new rates are supposed to take effect on Feb. 10.

That's because the "proposed" increases in fees and fines published in the Aug. 23, 2011, *Commonwealth Register* were "adopted" and published in the Jan. 30, 2012, *Commonwealth Register*, copies of which were released only yesterday. Once "adopted," the amended rules take effect 10 days after publication in the *Commonwealth Register*.

Unless the "adopted" increases in fines and fees are "actually" rescinded by the Department of Public Safety or its Commonwealth Fire Division, these fees will go into effect.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial had instructed

DPS not to proceed with the increased fees and fines. But no such formal notice of withdrawal has been issued as of yesterday.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said yesterday that the governor had already instructed DPS Commissioner Ray Mafnas not to go ahead with the proposed increases in fines and fees.

"The governor was advised by the commissioner that it will not go forward as planned," Demapan said.

But still, there's no formal notice that it will not go into effect 10 days after the Jan. 30 publication in the *Commonwealth Register*.

These other fees and fines include a permit for storing or handling aerosol products, operating aircraft refueling vehicles, using a Christmas tree, using candles and open flame device in assembly areas, and storage or handling of different types of hazardous chemicals.

Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan) reiterated yesterday his request to DPS not to proceed with the increased fees and fines.

He pre-filed House Bill 17-275, which places the authority to raise fire permit fees and fines in the Legislature, which would also have the power to establish a new fee and fine schedule.

Most of the annual permits and fees that he is proposing are only \$30. Some are \$10 and \$20, compared to DPS' proposal of \$500 to \$10,000.

Torres, one of the longest serving lawmakers in the CNMI, said it is "ridiculous" to increase fees by up to 49,900 percent.

MOUS

From Page 3

made as of Dec. 20, 2011, amounting to \$150,000.

Under the approved MOU, in case the CNMI government misses any payment of the remainder of the \$1.5 million, CUC may pursue any other remedy allowed by law.

CUC, in its separate MOU with PSS, indicated that the system is still liable for the remaining obligation, to be paid at a minimum of \$50,000 bi-weekly

with no interest. CUC said two payments have already received from PSS.

The proposed MOU, as adopted by the commission, also indicated that CUC will delay the filing of lawsuits for these delinquent accounts so long as PSS is making its current monthly payment.

As of Sept. 30 last year, CUC officials disclosed that the central government and the Public School System topped the list of accounts with large unpaid obligations. A total of 50 demand letters have already been served PSS for its delinquent accounts.

DOWN UNDER BOUND

Arthur T. Welch, son of Valrick and Turiana Welch, has been called to serve a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He has been called to serve in the Sydney, Australia mission. Arthur is currently in New Zealand receiving training. Missionaries volunteer to serve two-year missions paying their own costs. Arthur is an eagle scout and a graduate of Marianas High School.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



House, Senate yet to agree on proposed Feb. 23 SOCA

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives has yet to agree to a Senate proposal to hold a joint ses-

sion on Feb. 23 to receive Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's State of the Commonwealth Address, al-

though some House members said yesterday that they would like to hear the governor's address "as soon as possible" or before he submits his fiscal year 2013 budget.

The governor has until April 1 to submit his proposed budget to the Legislature.

While the House leadership has yet to officially discuss the governor's SOCA, House floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan) believes it will be a good idea if the SOCA coincides with the governor's budget preparation.

Camacho said the SOCA need not necessarily be on the same day the governor submits his budget to the Legislature.

"But it will give the governor a chance to explain his spending plan and how he intends to carry out such plans to

achieve objectives," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

The Senate adopted on Dec. 27 a resolution calling for a joint session on Feb. 23 to accept the governor's SOCA. The resolution also requests Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) to report on federal matters affecting the CNMI.

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) hopes that the House can address the Senate resolution to give the governor and the delegate ample time to prepare.

Manglona said yesterday that the Senate is open to suggestions for a new SOCA date but still would like the House to communicate such intention.

Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) said he would like to have the governor deliver his SOCA "at the earliest pos-

sible time so that the people of the Commonwealth are made aware of [the CNMI's] state."

"We want to hear it directly from his mouth," he added.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) echoed this sentiment.

The last time Fitial delivered a SOCA was in 2009.

Article 3 Section 9(b) of the CNMI Constitution requires the governor to report at least annually to the Legislature regarding the affairs of the Commonwealth and new measures that are necessary or desirable.

Fitial submitted a financial report to the Legislature on Dec. 31, 2011, reporting a \$25.8 million budget deficit in fiscal year 2011.

If there's any SOCA in February, that will be for "[fiscal year] 2012 and beyond," officials said.

'Through NMC's shared governance, input is sought at all levels'

The Northern Marianas College emphasized in a statement released yesterday the important value and contribution made by students, staff, and faculty at all levels at the college.

"As an accredited institution of higher education, the Northern Marianas College's commitment to shared governance is paramount," said NMC president Sharon Y. Hart. "Through its shared governance structure and processes, all constituencies of the college—students, staff, faculty, and administrators—participate in major decisions in a spirit of collaboration, open and honest communication, engagement, and mutual respect and trust."

"Nowhere is this more apparent than when the college's feedback is sought on any proposed legislation," said Hart.

When legislation that may affect the college is introduced in the Legislature, that legislation is reviewed by the College's Management Team, which includes representatives from students, staff, faculty, as well as administrators from all divisions on campus. These representatives provide valuable input and are encouraged to meet with and seek input from the groups they represent.

According to Hart, this vehicle of expressing opinions and input is also reinforced at the Board of Regents level. During its meetings, the board considers and deliberates on pending legislation to arrive at a unified position that reflects the college's best interests. Here again on the board level, all constituencies are represented by each respective student, staff, or faculty regent.

"In lieu of using these shared governance structures, some members of the NMC community have chosen to work outside of them and utilize the media to share views that may not reflect the consensus of the college community or their constituents," said Hart.

Hart acknowledged that constituent representatives will need the training necessary to help them carry out their responsibilities more effectively. She indicated that the college will step up its efforts to ensure that student, staff, and faculty representatives receive the support they need from the president's office, the other regents, and college leaders. One of these efforts is to provide a comprehensive, formal orientation that other regents receive when they are appointed to the Board of Regents.

"I also want to thank the members of the Legislature who came to campus last week to meet with us and to learn

about the important progress that we have been making on several fronts," added Hart. "Moving forward, we want to continue to build upon the important partnership between the legislature and the Northern Marianas College."

"At the same time, I want to apologize for any accusations that may have been incorrectly and inappropriately directed at Rep. Janet Maratita," said Hart. The college was empowered to control many aspects of the meeting's agenda and felt some

of the discussions needed to be hastened. As a result, some participants of the meeting did not feel they had an adequate opportunity to voice their concern or respond to inquiries."

"Our discussion on pending legislation affecting NMC will require an ongoing dialogue between the college and the Legislature. We look forward to meeting more frequently with our elected leaders to discuss our challenges and progress toward meeting our mission." (NMC)

Suspect in jail for 6 months now objects to delay in sentencing

The U.S. Probation Office has asked the federal court to delay the sentencing of a man who was found guilty of trying to sneak aboard a Los Angeles-bound flight using fake documents but the suspect objected because he's been in jail for more than six months now, when the maximum recommended sentence is only six months.

U.S. Probation Officer Margarita D. Wonenberg filed Tuesday a request for the U.S. District Court for the NMI to reschedule Dongjun Li's sentencing from Feb. 3 to Feb. 15 to allow the probation officer to respond to Li's objections filed on Jan. 25 and 27, 2012.

Li, through counsel Mark A. Scoggins, objected yesterday to rescheduling the sentencing.

Scoggins said his client has been in the U.S. Marshal Service's custody since July 15, 2011, and has been in jail for more than six months already.

If sentencing is further delayed, Li will have been in custody for seven months by the time he is sentenced, Scoggins said.

"Under Mr. Li's interpretation of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, he has already served longer than the maximum recommended sentence of six months," the lawyer said.

Scoggins also objected to the tardiness of the presentence investigation report filed by the U.S. Probation Office. He said the lateness of the report was among their objections presented to the U.S. Probation Office.

Li, a Chinese national, was found guilty in October of immigration fraud and false statement. The document fraud was related to Li's possession and use of fake parole documents when he tried to check in for a trip to California on July 15, 2011, at the Saipan International Airport. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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'EMPLOYER SUPPORT'

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and U.S. Interior Assistant Secretary Tony Babauta join employers, non-profit groups and other government officials for a group photo on Tuesday after Babauta and the CNMI Department of Commerce recognized employers who hired eligible U.S. workers as a result of an October 2011 job fair co-hosted by the Interior and CNMI Commerce.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

New arts council manual seeks to allay NEA concerns

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture has already developed a Policy and Procedure Manual in response to concerns raised by the National Endowment for the Arts Office of the Inspector General about the improper use of grant funds

awarded the council.

Arts Council executive director Angel S. Hocog said yesterday that the manual aims to guide staff and board members "in the effective and ethical management of the grant funds entrusted to the CCAC."

The manual, which has over 90 pages, contains 14 policies: policy manual requirement,

code of conduct, grant ineligibility due to disbarment or suspension, non-discrimination and accessibility, grant application guide, grant management, internal control systems, accounting system identifying and tracking expenditures, allowable charges, personnel activity report, purchase of capital equipment, allowable travel,

grant obligation requirements, and reference materials.

"It is the Council's responsibility to ensure that all board members and employees read these policies and procedures, fully understand them and both comply with and implement them. The integrity and effectiveness of the Council will be measured by its success in meeting this responsibility," states part of the manual.

The manual was signed by Hocog, Council board chair Joe M. Diaz, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

Hocog disclosed that the manual, which was submitted to inspector general Tonie Jones on Jan. 31, was crafted with the help of Frank Gibson of HR Support, CNMI, which was contracted in August 2011 to develop the manual to comply with NEA requirements.

The NEA Office of the Inspector General issued in August 2010 a report that prompted NEA in October 2009 to suspend funding for the Arts Council. The report covers grants received by the Council

from NEA from 2005 to 2009. Among the NEA recommendations was for the Arts Council to develop written policies and implement procedures that will address inadequacies and conform with NEA requirements.

Since the report was issued, Hocog said they have been working with NEA through Jones with whom they discussed the findings and recommendations in several teleconferences.

Hocog said that Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Melvin Faisao and accountant Roselle Teregeyo worked with NEA in reconciling the \$337,666 identified as potential refund by the Council to NEA. The amount, Hocog

said, went down to just \$48,000.

"It was a very challenging journey," Hocog told *Saipan Tribune*, referring to the process of working on the recommendations of the report.

Hocog said they have yet to hear from Jones, who will review and approve the manual.

He is hoping that the Council will be able to receive funding from NEA once again following the approval of the manual and compliance with other NEA requirements. He said the Council has been struggling to look for funds for its events and activities following the suspension of NEA grants.

"I have faith that, at least, NEA will give us a chance to correct our errors," he added.

Charges vs woman accused of stealing a client's USCIS filing fees dismissed

Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman dismissed yesterday the charges against a woman who allegedly stole U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services filing fees from an alien worker.

Wiseman dropped the case against Ma. Nina Dolot Castro after the Office of the Attorney General moved to dismiss the theft by deception and theft charges filed against her.

A bench trial was scheduled yesterday but assistant attorney general Russell Lorring asked the judge to instead dismiss the case, saying the 51-year-old Castro faces an indictment in district court arising from the same scheme.

Although he granted the OAG's motion, the judge noted that the charges in federal court are different.

According to the OAG, Castro obtained money from Norlane Arlane Vargas Rafanan by

deception on Oct. 27, 2009.

The OAG said Castro was expected to process applications and mail money orders to USCIS, but instead she endorsed the money order to herself.

The OAG only stated that the amount stolen from the victim was more than \$250 but less than \$20,000.

Last month, a federal grand jury indicted Castro on the same mail fraud charges for which she was arrested in August but the case was eventually dismissed.

The indictment had charged the defendant with eight counts of mail fraud, four counts of altering a postal money order, and for counts of passing or uttering an altered postal money order.

According to the indictment, through her scheme of stealing clients' payments for professional services and USCIS filing fees, Castro defrauded clients and her employers of about \$27,000. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)

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DIRECTOR, P&S

Rudnytsky promises: I'll be back

By **CLARISSA V. DAVID**
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Roman Rudnytsky, the world-renowned classical pianist who is on island and is scheduled to leave by the end of the week,

said the community can expect him to return to the CNMI again.

"With an invitation, I'll be back," Rudnytsky assured. "In fact, I may be back next year." Rudnytsky arrived on

Saipan two Sundays ago at the invitation of the Friends of the Arts and visited various high schools in the CNMI before his show, "An Evening of Magical Music," that was held at the Pacific Islands Club

Charley's Cabaret on Jan. 29.

Rudnytsky, who is here for the fifth time, said that for many of the high school students he performed for, it was their first time to hear classical piano. "For these kids, it was a new experience for a vast majority."

According to Rudnytsky, he will "probably be playing" with

the Guam Symphony in March next year. "In connection with that, then I would come here absolutely. I'll be looking forward very much to it," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

FOA president

Susan Fishman-Tudor said in a separate interview that Rudnytsky has been talking about coming back to perform with



Rudnytsky

the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band.

Fishman-Tudor expressed hope that more people from the community will provide their support to FOA, which doesn't

earn much from ticket sales in their events but from solicitations and sponsorships by placing advertisements in their programs.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS PTA may require Parent Report Cards

The Marianas High School Parent Teacher Association is encouraging all parents to attend its second quarterly meeting on Thursday, Feb. 2, 2012, at MHS Dolphin Theater, formerly known as the T Building, from 4pm to 6pm. The second quarter report cards will be distributed to parents after attending the PTA meeting.

Important items for discussion include: Election of officers for SY 2012-2013, the possible requirement of Parent Report Cards, update of ongoing projects, as well as a presentation on the PSS Core Standards Curriculum.

The MHS Dolphin Theater Glee Club will also present a special performance during the meeting. Call the MHS Main office at 664-3800 for more information. (PR)

Report card day at Kagman High on Friday

Kagman High School is issuing all second quarter report cards on Friday, Feb. 3, to be sent home with students. It is a full-day schedule. Students will bring their report cards home that night to share their second quarter grades with parents. Parents, remind your children to show you their reports! Report card grades are final and cannot be changed. Parents who want to request meetings with teachers may call the main office to set appointments.

Progress reporting for the third quarter will be in the first week of March. Parents and guardians are encouraged to come meet with teachers and staff during this event. Progress reporting is the best time to discuss progress and intervention strategies for struggling students. Call 237 3840 if you have any questions. (PR)

Courthouse schedule for February

Through the end of February 2012, CNMI courthouses on all three islands will be open with full operations except as noted below.

Saipan: Limited operation on Friday, Feb. 10, 2012. Only essential services of the Office of the Clerk of Court, the Office of Adult Probation Services, the Family Court Division, the Marshal Service Division, and Judicial Chambers will be provided.

Closed on: Monday, Feb. 20, 2012 (President's Day)

Rota: Closed on Monday, Feb. 6, 2012

Tinian: Closed on Monday, Feb. 20, 2012

The CNMI Judicial Council will meet again on Feb. 15, 2012, and the hours of operation for March will be released shortly after.

More information may be obtained by calling the Clerk of Court's office phone number, 236-9765 on Saipan, 433-3410 on Tinian and 532-9422 Rota, or by contacting the Supreme Court's Public Information Office at 236-9716. (PR)

DOJ: Tax suit is about abusive tax avoidance scheme

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A company's lawsuit against the U.S. government for alleged erroneous tax adjustments is about an abusive tax avoidance scheme known as a Distressed Asset Debt tax shelter, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

DOJ trial attorney Andy R. Camacho, counsel for the U.S. government, filed Tuesday a motion for summary judgment in the lawsuit filed by Delaware limited liability company, Claston LLC.

Camacho asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to rule that Claston cannot prove the debt that allegedly created the tax loss ever existed.

Camacho also asked the court to issue a judgment considering that the undisputed facts show that the contributions to the partnership at issue were disguised sales and, thus,

subject to tax.

Claston LLC, through its CNMI managing member and tax matters partner, Sunset Holdings LLC, sued the U.S. government for allegedly making erroneous tax adjustments and assessing penalties over the company's 2002 tax return.

Claston, through counsel Gregory J. Koebel, asked the federal court to issue a judgment declaring that the company properly reported its 2002 transactions.

In DOJ's motion, Camacho said the goal of the Distressed Asset Debt tax shelter scheme, also known as DAD, is to create tax losses deductions without economic reality. Camacho said the Internal Revenue Service and Treasury Department became aware in early 2000 that taxpayers were improperly using partnerships to engage in DAD transactions.

In response to this abuse, Congress acted in 2004 through

the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 to eliminate the deductions related to the transactions, effective for transactions entered into after Oct. 22, 2004, Camacho said.

Specifically, he said, Congress amended the Internal Revenue Code to prevent shifting a built-in loss from a tax-indifferent foreign entity to a U.S. taxpayer through the use of a partnership.

Camacho said the DAD transaction at issue in this case follows the pattern of the typical DADs.

"The transaction in this case was co-promoted through Gramercy Advisors (together with other Gramercy-affiliated entities) (jointly referred to as "Gramercy") and KPMG and involved debt with that had a fair market value of around \$85,000, which was used to generate a \$6 million loss unrelated to any actual economic loss," the lawyer alleged.



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<p>Western Family Cereals Bags 32oz \$4.95 each</p>	<p>Western Family Water 24pcs \$6.96 case</p>	<p>Fresh Banana .99¢ lb.</p>	<p>Jumbo Carrots .93¢ lb.</p>	<p>Green Cabbage .93¢ lb.</p>



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USNH Guam opens Blood Donor Center

By GABRIELLE BLAKE
Mass Communication Specialist
2nd Class (SW)
JOINT REGION EDGE STAFF

U.S. Naval Hospital Guam held a christening ceremony for its new blood donor center in the hospital's laboratory in Agana Heights, Guam on Jan. 26.

"We need blood banks to support our patients here," said Lt. John Stephan, USNH Guam blood bank officer. "Most importantly, it's to provide them blood products in case of surgeries or any kind of trauma that comes in. We're there to provide support."

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Karla Manuel, of USNH Guam, was the first to have her blood drawn and donated in the new center.

"I think it's a good cause," said Manuel. "Your blood gets split into different components, so the one pint you donate can save a few lives."

Before the opening of the center, USNH Guam received blood donations from Okinawa, Japan.

"Now that we have our own blood donor center here, we can go out, we can collect blood and we have it available within a shorter period of time than it



(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS (SW) GABRIELLE BLAKE/RELEASED)
U.S. Naval Hospital Guam's phlebotomist Dio Patague sticks a needle into the arm of Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Karla Manuel, of USNH Guam, to draw a pint of her blood during the opening of the new blood donor center at the hospital's laboratory in Agana Heights Jan. 26. Manuel volunteered to be first to donate blood to the center.

would be to get it from Okinawa," Stephan said.

The new center will help to meet a great demand for something anyone could need at any time.

"Ninety-six percent of the

population relies on 4 percent of the population to donate blood," said Lt. Cmdr. Josephine Fajardo, the hospital's laboratory department head. "We need to make that 4 percent grow."

The blood donor center is

open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8am to 2pm at the hospital's laboratory.

"I really look forward to the future of continuing and expanding our donor collections on the island," Stephan said.

Tax Center opens for business at Naval Base Guam

By SHAINA MARIE SANTOS
JOINT REGION EDGE STAFF

The tax center officially reopened for business after a ribbon-cutting ceremony on U.S. Naval Base Guam on Jan. 30.

The center is run with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program and is staffed with 24 volunteers who will service both Andersen Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam.

Lt. Craig Thedwall, of the Navy Legal Service Office, said sailors and dependents volunteer to undergo a week of training with the Internal Revenue Service and a tax specialist.

"They're fully qualified to assist people with tax preparation," Thedwall said. "And so we have sailors come in, bring their documentation and these designated volunteers assist them in preparing all their taxes for free."

According to Site Coordinator Jared Anderson, the tax center is available to service members, retirees, and civilian contractors.

"You can come in and get your taxes done for free," Anderson said. "You don't have to worry about paying any money and to set people's mind at ease."

Customers may walk in for service. However, if a customer's taxes are more detailed or complex, they may set up an appointment at the tax center.

"Last year we prepared almost a thousand tax returns, so the Navy VITA program here is one of the biggest programs actually in the Navy,"



(U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY SHAINA MARIE SANTOS/RELEASED)
Military spouse Shanna Demoss enters the U.S. Naval Base Guam Tax Center after its reopening on U.S. Naval Base Guam Jan. 30. The tax center is open to service members, dependents, retirees and civilian contractors free of charge and operates Monday-Friday from 8:30am to 11am and 1pm to 3pm.

Thedwall said. "Guam is a remote location and there aren't a lot of choices for tax prep. And so we try to support the sailors as best we can by having as big a program as possible so we can help as many people as we can."

This year, Anderson not only coordinated the opening of the Naval Base Guam Tax Center, but also assisted the University of Guam in opening a VITA

programmed tax center, providing the island with its first free tax preparation center.

According to Anderson, the UOG tax center will be open to the general public, and in full accordance with VITA regulations.

"UOG is very upstanding in the local economy and it's a great pleasure to help them set up their own free VITA site, since it is going to be the first

VITA site on Guam," Anderson said. "I hope it goes over well with the local economy and the military economy and I hope they feel we're here to help them whenever they need."

The Naval Base Guam tax center is located in Barracks 1A, next to Video Vision and is open Monday-Friday from 8:30am to 11am and 1pm to 3pm. For more information, call 333-2061/2.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Feb. 2, 1999

PSS extends term for non-certified personnel

The Public School System is extending until May the employment term for its close to 300 non-certified personnel whose contracts are scheduled to expire next month. According to acting Fiscal and Budget Officer William Matson, the extension guarantees their employment with PSS from to date until May. "It doesn't mean that they won't be employed (with PSS) after that but that's all we can guarantee," he said. Earlier, PSS officials have entertained options on hourly wages and reduced salary rate to prolong their employment. Schools will also have the option to retain them using operational money.

PSS gets lukewarm support for its dollar-contract

The dollar-contract of the Public School System designed to spell commitment for volunteer work from the community is off to a slow start. Since its launching in December, only two community members have come forward to lend PSS their support with a dollar-contract. "Many have mentioned their interest but this office has received at least two requests to process the dollar contract," according to Human Resource Officer Charlie Kenty. Former educators Paz Younis and Margaret dela Cruz are the first two volunteers who have finalized their commitment through the dollar-contract.

Feb. 2, 2000

CPA to install automated parking meter

The Commonwealth Ports Authority Board of Directors on Friday approved the installation of an automated parking meter at the Saipan International Airport in efforts to improve efficiency. The contract for the \$177,000 automated parking meter project has been awarded to Sablan Enterprises, according to CPA Executive Director Carlos H. Salas. Mr. Salas said the Ports Authority is expecting that the automated parking meters are already installed, and should be ready for full implementation in May. Imposition of charges at the airport's public parking area was decided to increase current level of CPA revenues while repressing adverse effects on the airline industry by delaying the implementation of new aviation rate schedule.

CNMI lobbies FCC for expanded telecoms and internet support

In a series of filings made with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in December 1999 and January 2000, the Office of the Governor urged the FCC to increase its support for health care-related telecommunications and for high speed internet access services in the CNMI. The FCC had sought comment from the public on possible reforms to its Universal Service program, intended to support telecommunications to high cost, low income and insular areas (such as the CNMI). According to Lt. Governor Jesus R. Sablan, "We are pleased that the FCC has initiated this proceeding to consider how to more meaningfully extend funding to insular areas such as the CNMI. We hope that the FCC will closely and carefully consider the CNMI's proposal for increased telemedicine and Internet access funding."

Feb. 2, 2001

NMC earns WASC commendation

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges is expected to transmit any day now the result of the accrediting team's campus-wide comprehensive evaluation that will determine the credibility of the Northern Marianas College as an effective educational entity. NMC officials are confident the accreditation panel will reaffirm the college's six-year-accreditation after receiving a WASC report that spoke teeming high of the college's offered programs and services. A summary of the WASC evaluation report cited 13 general commendations versus eight general recommendations for improvement. NMC initially scored high points on its internally-developed Self Study which the visiting team described as "well written, organized and candid."

Tinian opens new NMC campus

Local leaders and residents and Northern Marianas College Regents, administrators, and staff celebrated the official opening of the Tinian's brand new postsecondary educational facility, the NMC Tinian campus, highlighted by a special ribbon-cutting ceremony. With \$440,000 in funding from the Municipality of Tinian, the two new, state-of-the-art buildings were designed and built by the Telesource Corporation for maximum security, energy conservation and safety.

Island Snapshots



UPGRADED COMPUTER LAB

Thanks to ARRA funding and the technical expertise of Computer Center staff, the University of Guam recently upgraded the Computer Center main lab located in the MARC/Computer Center Building with 40 new Dell personal computers, new computer tables, HD projectors and HD LED televisions for multimedia purposes. The main lab is now set up to accommodate up to 50 people for presentation purposes. Pictured from left are Robert Itugot, IT Support Tech; Mark Ordenez, IT Support Tech; Steven Centino, Student Work-Study; Bernard Macusi, IT Support Tech.

UOG

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Happy, happy birthday to Arisha Nishimura! Enjoy your special day today and may you have many more birthdays to come. We love and miss you! From Esah Tomokane and family in Bamberg, Germany.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday to our wonderful grandma and mom, Ann San Nicolas, and happy sweet 16th birthday to Shaniah Alvarez! May you both celebrate and enjoy another year filled with love and blessings! With lot of love from your Alvarez family!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy 41st birthday to Jerome Galvan Cruz aka Uncle Long! Hope you have a great day, enjoy, take care, and be safe. We love and miss you and may God bless you. Greetings come from the Chungi-Batitang family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 21st birthday to Martinie Josie Santos Calvo! Hope you enjoy your day, wish we were with you to celebrate your special day. We love and miss you so much. Have fun, be safe, and take care! Love always, your mom, dad, sisters, and brothers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



A DECADE AFTER



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 10th anniversary to Mr. and Mrs. JJ and Samantha Salas! With love, your family.

Adult Basic Education spring 2012 calendar

The Northern Marianas College’s Adult Basic Education program has announced the following academic dates for the spring 2012 semester:

- Registration for Returning ABE Students:** Feb. 6-7, Monday-Thursday, 10am-4pm, ABE Office
- Registration for New ABE Students:** Feb. 8-9, Wednesday-Thursday, 10am-4pm, ABE Office
- ABE Late Registration:** Feb. 10 & 13, Friday and Monday, 9am-4pm, ABE Office
- Student Orientation for ABE Students:** Feb. 14, Tuesday, 6pm-7pm, NMC Student Center
- Add/Drop for ABE Students:**

- Feb. 15-17, Wednesday-Friday, 9am-4pm, ABE Office
- Feb. 20-22, Monday-Wednesday, 9am-4pm, ABE Office
- First Day of Instruction:**
 - MWF Classes: Feb. 15, 2012
 - TTh Classes: Feb. 16, 2012
 - Sat. Classes: Feb. 18, 2012
 - Sun. Classes: Feb. 19, 2012
- This schedule is subject to change. For more information, log on to www.nmcnet.edu or contact the ABE Office at 234-5498 Ext. 1721, 1723, or 1724. (NMC)

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 237 E 02, containing an area of approximately 5,751 square meters, more or less, situated in Lower Base, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation. The Directors of the Corporation are Mr. Joseph Borja, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino, and Mr. Paul Zak.

The Officers of the Corporation are Mr. Joseph Borja – President, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino – Treasurer, and Mr. Paul Zak – Secretary / Vice President.

iii. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Joseph Borja and Mr. Anthony Pellegrino.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of developing and operating a USDA certified meat slaughtering facility and related activities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years. The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; Songsong Village, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower, Saipan.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before February 14, 2012 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

NUTISIA PUT MAPROPONIN ATKILON TĀNU' PUPBLIKU

Sigun gi Seksiona 106(b) gi Lain Pupbluku 15-2, i Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbluku guini ha nā'i nutisia ni intension-ña para u mana'ma'atkila pumalu na tānu' pupbluku siha giya Saipan, Commonwealth gi Sangkattan na Islas Marianas siha. Maseha hāyi na pattida siha gi halum i pupbluku henerāt siña ha na'hålum i imfotmasion, opiñon, pat testamoñun kinentra siha gi tinahguin propositu siha ni para i atkilon tānu' pupbluku. Sigi mās mo'na mapribeni gi ginin i Lain Pupbluku 15-2, i tinattitiyi pettanesin imfotmasion ni madimānda ni debi na u mapupblika.

i. I maproponi na atkilon tānu' pupbluku ha diskribi kumu Lot No. 237 E 02, ni kinonsisti āria kāsī guaha 5,751 square meters, mās pat menus, ni gaigi giya Lower Base, Saipan. I kopian i lugāt gaigi gi pumalu na gumuaha gi Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbluku siha ni para i rikunosimientu.

ii. I manatkikila i Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation . I Direktot i Corporation siha si Siñot Joseph Borja, Siñot Anthony Pellegrino, yan si Siñot Paul Zak.

I Ufisiālīs siha gi ārian Corporation si Siñot Joseph Borja – Presidenti , si Siñot Anthony Pellegrino - i Tresureru, yan si Siñot Paul Zak - Sekritāriu /Sigundu Presidenti.

iii. I maproponi na atkilon manigosi gi as Siñot Joseph Borja yan Siñot Anthony Pellegrino.

iv. I manatkikila debi na u usa i lugāt solamienti para hinangai developing yan operating i fasilidāt i USDA certified meat slaughtering yan i mana'achuli' na aktibidāt siha.

I teman i maproponi na kuntrātan atkilon sa' 25 ānus, yan option para u ma'ekstendi i atkilon gi ta'lu 15 ānus.

I maproponi na āpas atkilon gi sakkan gi durāntin i tema sigun gi percentage gi appraised fair market value gi propiedāt, ingklusu i prisenti na estroktura.

v. Kopian i manmaproponi na kontrātan atkilon siña machuli' gi ufisinan i Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbluku siha, gaigi gi sigundu bibienda 2nd floor gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building giya Dandan, Saipan; gi Songsong Village, Luta; pat i primet 1st bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. I Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbluku siha tāya' na ha risibi tinahguin propositu siha para sinuhetun atkilon tanu' pupbluku siha giya Lower Base, Saipan.

vii. I Sekritāriun i Dipattamentun Tanu' Pupbluku siha debi na u aksepta i tinigi' i imfotmasion, opiñon yan testamoñun kinentra pat tinahguin propositu siha ginin i manggai interes na pattida siha gi pat āntis di Fibreru 14, 2012 gi ufisinan Dipattamentun Tānu' Pupbluku siha ni gaigi Saipan, Luta, pat Tinian.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil ye 106(b) mellól Allégghul Toulap 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, ekki atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipel, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka remuschál emwal rebwe isisilong yaar mǎngemǎng, data awewee, me angiingi reel pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap. Sengi Allégghul Toulap ye 15-2, ebwal ayoora, lamal awewee kka rebwe mweiti ngáli milikka ebwe akkatééló.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap nge ekki bwáari Lot No. 237 E. 02, eyoor Limwoow Sangaras, Fisabwughúw limeigh me eew laapal(5,751 square meters) elapeló me ngáre eghús, elo Lower Base, Seipel. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor mereel Bwulasiyool Falúweer Toulap(Public Lands) ngáre óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilón nge Marianas Meat Harvesting Corporation. Direkktoodol Corporation yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino me Mr. Paul Zak.

Schóól officers il Corporation yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja-President, Mr. Anthony Pellegrino-Treasurer, me Mr. Paul Zak-Secretary/Vice President

iii. Schóól aweweey akkilon yel nge Mr. Joseph Borja me Mr. Anthony Pellegrino

iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá falúw yeel rel ebwe ayoora me angaanga eew leliyal lil maal iye USDA certified me bwal akkaw mwóghutughut.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon nge reweigh me limoow ráagh (25 years). Emmwel rebwe bwal sóóbwey ngáli seigh me limoow ráagh (15 years).

Pomwol méél akkilon nge ebwe mwiril sáangi percentage il yaal appraised fair market value il falúw.

v. Tilighial akkilon yeel nge emmwel óubwe bwughi merel bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap, elo aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building Ilól Tuturam, Seipél; Songsong village, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tehúlúyól.

vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo pomwol akkilon ye elo Lower Base, Seipél.

vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge ebwe bwughi ischil mǎngemǎng, aingiingil merel amweyút mmwal Febrero 14, 2012 mellól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta, ngare Tehúlúyól.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Outrage in Egypt

The Egyptian military was very comfortable with the dictatorship of President Hosni Mubarak, who ruled the country for 30 years before being forced out by mass protests last year. And though the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces has assumed responsibility for managing the transition to democracy, it is having trouble changing its ways.

Egyptians are getting impatient with the slow pace of the transition, which seems designed to keep the military in the catbird seat. Last week saw huge anti-government rallies demanding that the generals hand over power right away.

In recent weeks, the government has responded by going after international non-governmental organizations that advocate for human rights and popular rule. In December, security agents invaded the offices of several groups, seizing computers, papers, cellphones and money.

Among the targets were three organizations that get funding from the U.S. government—the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House. When the rulers try to blame the massive recent pro-democracy protests on “foreign hands,” they apparently have these NGOs in mind.

It was a shocking assault even by the standards of police states. Charles Dunne, director of Middle East and North African affairs for Freedom House, says he doesn't recall anything comparable happening in any of the countries where it operates.

As if that weren't bad enough, the Egyptian government has barred several Americans who work for either the IRI or the NDI, including Sam LaHood, son of transportation secretary Ray LaHood, from leaving the country.

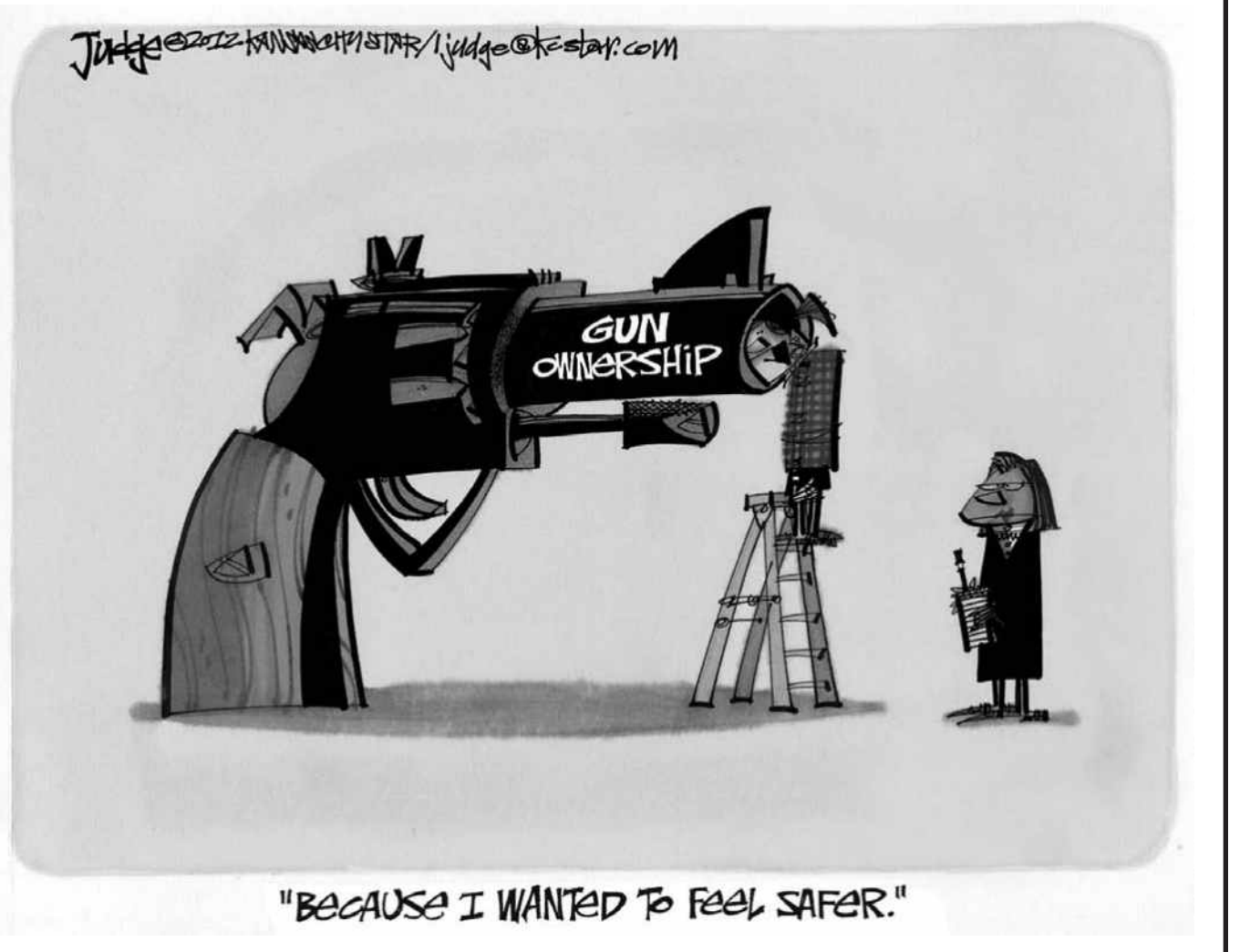
The younger LaHood says the charge that IRI has been fomenting unrest is “patently false.” But his lawyer has warned him that he and others may be prosecuted. Some of those under threat, including LaHood, have taken refuge in the U.S. embassy.

If the regime persists in this thuggery, it can expect to pay a heavy price. Egypt gets \$1.3 billion a year in aid from Washington—and the law requires Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to certify that Egypt is making progress toward democracy and human rights before releasing this year's funds.

The State Department has made it clear that Egypt can't expect to keep getting financial assistance if it behaves in this way. In that, Congress will most likely agree. “If the administration follows the law, there's no way they can continue the aid,” Rep. Frank Wolf, R-Va., a member of the Appropriations Committee, told The Washington Post.

If the Egyptian government has any evidence of wrongdoing on the part of these groups, it has an obligation to make it public now—that, or stop its harassment. In the meantime, the administration should let the military council know it can trample on human rights and abuse American citizens or continue getting U.S. aid. But it can't do both.

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Time to give debates a rest

Televised candidate debates have become the marquee spectacles of presidential campaigns. By the time Republicans vote in the Florida primary, candidates seeking the party's presidential nomination will have debated 19 times since May. That's 30-some hours of live national TV, plus untold hours of recap, recrimination and chatter spun off by the events.

Now, as somebody who deplores the larcenous rates commercial broadcasters normally charge candidates to reach the electorate, I'm glad. The debates constitute a grant of free TV time to hopefuls who might otherwise be priced off the air and out of the race.

But beyond that, since debates seem certain to be a feature of U.S. elections as far as the eye can see, it's worth asking about how they affect the way elections are conducted and decided.

At the outset, a huge core fact: These debates are TV shows. They aren't events arranged independently by candidates that the media then decide are newsworthy enough to broadcast. They are classic pseudo-events, in the late Daniel Boorstin's memorable term—they happen only because they'll be televised. Accordingly, media organizations far outnumber all other co-sponsors: Of this season's 19 Republican debates, Wikipedia notes, four co-sponsors were foundations or universities, 12 were political entities, and 34 were media organizations.

That's not new. The 2008 primaries, when both parties had fierce primary races, had 34 debates, according to the Democracy in Action website. The co-sponsors: 13 political groups, 14 foundations or universities, and 55 media organizations.

This co-dependency rests on warm and cozy mutual advantage: The candidates get to tee up their messages, the media get a self-replenishing source of quotable utterances. Broadcasters, who nowadays break less and less news, get a cheap and exhilarating chance to once again be a vital source of current affairs programming.

But to what effect? As a fan of this season's GOP debates, I began wondering whether their overall impact on political discourse was, in partisan terms, absurdly one-sided. For months, hours of television time had been given to aspirants who agreed on little but their conviction that the Obama administration has been a disastrous failure.

There was no room for dissent on that fundamental premise. Debate protocol, obviously enough, enables candidates who are attacked to respond. But if someone egregiously distorted the facts about the incumbent administration, and nobody on stage thought they'd win any friends by correcting the distortion, the false assertion stood unchallenged.

Now, consider the cumulative impact of having dozens of hours of such lopsided discourse, in which the only push-back came from within the closed universe of a single party. It occurred to me that the overall consequence of such an intensely covered primary sea-

By EDWARD WASSERMAN
The Miami Herald

Edward Wasserman is Knight professor of journalism ethics at Washington and Lee University. He wrote this column for The Miami Herald. Readers may write to him at: The Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Miami, Fla. 33132; website: www.edwardwasserman.com.



son, when candidates from one party vied before national audiences to run against a sitting president, might be powerful tailwind for the challengers and against the incumbent.

That seemed like an unintended, but fundamentally unfair, consequence of the media's decision to stage an extensive series of televised events devoted exclusively to conveying the opposition party's view of the world.

But perhaps the overwhelmingly partisan tilt to the debates is only part of the picture. There's another reality: The debates, though unbalanced, may not actually help the would-be candidates. True, they ensure exposure. But they're goofy affairs, they often devolve into bickering tit-for-tats that leave participants looking punch-drunk and diminished. The candidates mix it up gamely, for fear that if they don't they'll lower their scores among the commentators who will crown the winner, generally on the basis of such precision metrics as gaffes, body language, crowd reactions and a vague sense of overall vibe.

For the challengers, the problem with the debates is basic to the format: They give visibility, but at the cost of stature. How can anybody offer a plan for world peace in 90 seconds? Instead, the challengers get to beat each other over the heads with rubber chickens, while the incumbent remains aloof, statesmanlike and presidential.

The last time a crowded primary field faced a sitting president was 2004, when the opposition Democrats held a total of 14 debates before nominating Sen. John Kerry. And regardless of the powerful push you might think the Democrats should have gotten from their many hours of exclusive, one-sided air time, Bush carried 31 states and crushed Kerry.

The rampant proliferation of crowded candidate debates may provide the media with fodder, but they don't work as platforms for public illumination. They're both biased and belittling, and cater to some of the worst features of our political discourse. Other kinds of forums exist—roundtables focused on specific policy areas, for instance, or one-at-a-time encounters with knowledgeable reporters—that would let voters judge thoughtfulness and deliberation, not just facile repartee. This would be a good time for wiser heads in the media and political worlds to give these alternatives a road test.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Viewing your prospects from a 30,000-foot perspective: Part 2

Last week I shared the concept of viewing your customers from a metaphorical 30,000-foot perspective. This means that you take a much broader, three-dimensional look at them on their journey through life, and prior to the point where they have a need for your product. That point on their life map is represented by the “intersection” where you and your competitors are vying for their attention with similar media and advertising. If you were the first business to grab their attention prior to the point where they have a desire for your goods or services, then you would be in a better position to establish your business as a trusted professional, and effectively eliminate the competition as a choice.

Business is ultimately about attracting and keeping customers by offering solutions with goods and services that uniquely satisfy their wants and needs. Those wants and needs will change as they move through life, and they are heightened when they experience specific events at the intersection of their lives that create added stress and require additional solutions. I refer to these events and changes as “Life Transitions,” and they act as milestones, or intermediate reference points in a person’s life. Almost all of our memories are established during transition points, or moments where life-changing decisions are made that can take us on another route—or better or worse. Good decisions make good stories that we remember, and bad decisions make great stories that we never forget.

The starting point for everyone is birth and their final destination is to have lived a fulfilling life when their journey is complete. In between those two positions are numerous transition points throughout life that challenge a person to look for individuals and organizations that can provide better solutions to their wants and needs. Some of the major Life Transitions that many people will travel through in their life’s journey include parenting, starting school, employment

and career development, engagement and wedding, pregnancy and birth, celebrating special events, moving and relocation, purchasing or renting a house, starting and growing a business, taking care of health issues, retirement, divorce, and coping with the death of a loved one.

When you view the lives of your prospects from a heightened perspective, you’ll see how each Life Transition is part of the continuous journey your prospects will encounter on their timeline road. The transitions also create stress in a good or bad way, and act as catalysts to trigger new needs and wants that were latent or did not previously exist. This drives individuals to seek out goods and services that they are motivated to purchase soon.

For example, when a couple becomes engaged, the event triggers a slew of needs and wants that will need to be satisfied before the eventual marriage. The bride, groom, and families will need rings, a cake, announcements, decorations, tuxedos, dresses, a bridal gown, photos, catered food, etc. Some businesses earn a large portion of their revenue catering to couples who are experiencing this particular Life Transition.

In addition, one Life Transition can be the catalyst for several other transitions. For example, when a couple weds, they may have graduated from school, are planning to move to a new location, and will possibly start a new career. In the near future, they may have a baby and experience parenting.

At the present moment, many of the prospects in your target market may be experiencing a specific Life Transition that connects them with you. Imagine, though, if you could figuratively use Google Maps to view your prospect’s life at the ground level, and then increase the altitude to an elevation that allows you to view all their Life Transition intersections that are before and after the ones you best serve.

By **RIK VILLEGAS**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Rik coaches business owners to develop consistently profitable businesses that can operate without them. He can be contacted at RikVillegas@gmail.com, and you can comment on this article at <http://rikv.blogspot.com>.



Often, the specific Life Transition that you and all your competitors center your marketing efforts around is preceded by one or more transition points that are the focus of other non-competing businesses that are gathered at the intersections your prospects just left. Instead of doing what all your competitors do by figuratively standing at your prospect’s specific Life Transition intersection and just waiting for them to show up and take notice of your business, you should also develop beneficial relationships with those non-competing and complementary businesses.

I call them complementary businesses because they are focused on the same prospects as your business, but they are positioned earlier in the Life Transition intersection. In the wedding example, after a ring is purchased at the jewelry store and the bride accepts the proposal, many other businesses will be visited prior to the wedding date, such as flower shops and reception centers, to complete the process that ensures a successful wedding. It makes sense that a business visited later in the timeline should develop a mutually beneficial relationship with complementary businesses visited earlier in the timeline. In next week’s article you’ll learn how to work with complementary businesses to build a strong reputation that encourages their customers to visit your business.

Mama mia, Cara mia

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvargarajr2031@aol.com) previously taught at San Vicente Elementary School on Saipan and is currently a guest lecturer at Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



More than a year ago, we wrote of our encounter along the Amur River in Heihe, Heilongjiang, with a statue simply identified as *Mu Qin* (mother), signifying the source and sustainer of life, in this case the Heilongjiang.

In China, the mother of all mothers, and also dubbed as the “cradle of civilization,” is the mighty Huanghe, the Yellow River, weaving a route that is usually drawn like a dragon with its tail up the foothills of Qinghai through 9 provinces, widening past Henan into its head at Bohai Sea, a 5,500-km journey.

We are briefly in Honolulu to visit 91-year-old Mom in between teaching semesters in Huanghe’s *Dong Bei*, but the “image of mother” stuck as it struck us this past year when we heard China referred to as “motherland,” compared to European and patriarchal countries’ Fatherland. Singular bold images of contrast has “father” proud to send his offspring to war and uphold his name’s reputation, while “mother” keeps her roost at home in safety and health.

Mama Lucrecia has five children, girls on bookends, me at the head of the middle section, with one brother a military and police chaplain, and the other in a State law enforcement office. Eldest sister is a retired teacher in the Philippines, and youngest a nurse in one of Oahu’s hospitals.

None in our family went chasing after the limelight, but mother stumbled her way into it. Not unlike many (wife of the 19th U.S. President was the first to attend college, with current Michelle Obama as the most academically inclined, slightly ahead of Hillary Clinton), mother never finished high school to care for her brood.

Migrating to the United States with her Philippine retired Methodist pastor husband, she cooked for residents of Hale Kipa, a discreet halfway house for juvenile delinquents, where she was consistently voted as the “Counselor of the Year.” It appears that she did as much

counseling to her wards as she did feeding them nutritious meals.

It was while being a part-time cook that she attended a meeting to construct a Filipino Community Center in Waipahu. Impatient with the wealth of gab but, in her view, paucity of deeds, she finally got up in the meeting, waved a \$100 check and said in effect that the group can go on talking but the deed might get moving faster if everyone around the table put their money where their mouths were.

The *FilCom* (its Pinoy endearing name) is now the largest Filipino community center outside of the Philippines with distinguished Filipino-Hawaiian members on its staff and board. Mother’s name was interred with the century time capsule buried at the groundbreaking ceremony as the first donor toward the building.

Mother is now physically frail, confined to her apartment in Aala downtown Oahu. Father, who made it to 95, lies in tranquil Mililani since 2005, served Governor Ariyoshi’s Commission on Aging, and worked part-time with the senior companion program. One would think mother could easily avail of all the senior citizen public services available.

Not *Mama mia*. She won’t have any of it. “When I came to this country, I told the immigration officer that I will never be a ward of the state,” she intones in her polished Ilocandia pride, “and I intend to be faithful to my promise.” To the quiet dismay of her children, she told social services that she did not need the company of a senior companion nor meals from communal kitchens. In her characteristic Filipina *taray* (untranslatable), she says: “With three children on island, if I am not cared for, that’s my problem, and no one else’s.”

One of the three children has assumed the primary caregiver role; a granddaughter joins Uncles and Auntie to look after her quiet but dignified fading into the sunset of her years.

Popular myths tag immigrants as opportunistic burdens to public coffers. Not this mother. She’s poor, nay, indigent without being destitute, but she is rich in memories. Lying on her bed where she now spends most of her time, she occasionally looks into a couple of her albums, with her standing beside towering Mayor Jeremy Harris in her Filipina fineries, or beaming with Joyce Fasi who occasionally drove her to work even when husband Frank Fasi was no longer city mayor.

Our lowly cook from up the hill on Punahou have photos with the likes of Governors Cayetano and Lingle, Rep. Hirono and Congressman now Governor Abercrombie, to name easily recognizable figures, taken on genuine occasions where she was an active participant.

One of the houses used in the Golden Globe-awarded movie *Descendants* with George Clooney is an old Hawaiian plantation dwelling on Honolulu’s Makiki, its first upscale neighborhood. My

sister and I looked at each other when it first flashed on the screen. Mom and Dad took care of the building before it became the meditation center it is today.

China is a long way from *Sa Wei Yi* (Hawaii) and love from a distance is more sentiment than real, so this son who now relates to Huanghe’s multitudinous offspring in a learning center at its northeast corner, carries the heartbeat of a woman in a bed at Aala. Creating a new role of being a *Story Warrior*, we chronicle the graceful ordinariness of humans like my mother, to say again that mere existence itself is already a gift, a winsome option and a treasure to be celebrated. What we do with it, and the story we relate, is what makes us human.

Letter to the Editor

Accurate information

Dear Mr. DelRosario, You’re candid essay in regards to the physician staff at CHC was not only inaccurate but also very insulting to all of us who have worked very hard and countless hours of unpaid overtime. We are all here by choice. We like the islands and the people and our jobs. We could all take significantly higher paying jobs on the mainland if we wanted. The morale here is down and essays like that make it worse. This facility is in danger of shutting down and/or having a massive staff exodus. Is that what you really want?

Most of us here wish to stay and are working hard toward solutions. Please get your facts right before publishing next time. Sources that are part of the administration are not necessarily accurate, especially in terms of hospital statistics. Most of our administration has very little experience in the field to begin with.

Next time I suggest approaching the medical staff directly if you want accurate information and insight into what is going on at CHC. I also suggest that you never insult our surgeons again. Dr. Yarofilar has been a rock in an unstable environment and many times, has been the only general surgeon on the island, meaning he is on-duty 24/7. As a husband and father of three kids, I would be devastated if we didn’t have a surgeon of his caliber on island in case of emergency. He is a great man and a great surgeon. Shame on you.






Brian Sullivan, MD

Department of Internal Medicine
Pediatrics chair, Department of Pediatrics
Commonwealth Health Center

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph becoming east.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼74°	▲84° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲83 ▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲88 ▼79
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼80
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲85 ▼79

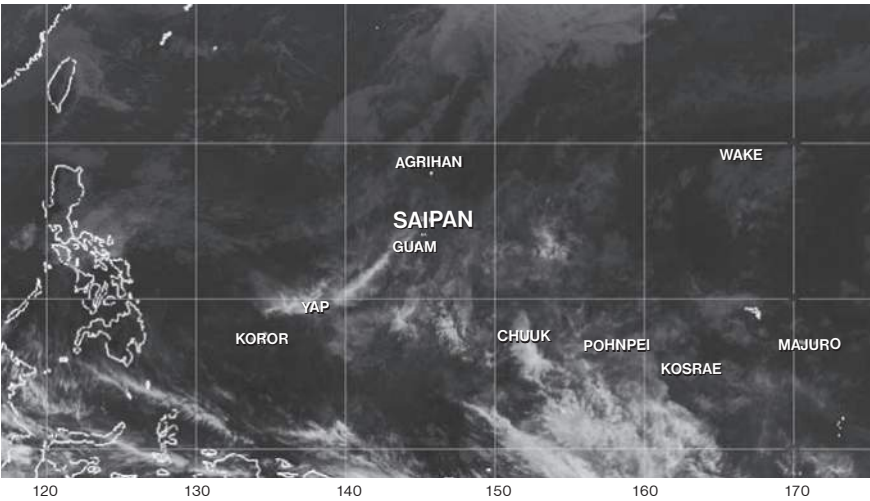
Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲70 ▼64
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	▲35 ▼11
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲61 ▼56
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲79 ▼69
London	Mostly Sunny	▲38 ▼29
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲76 ▼46
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲84 ▼73
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲83 ▼58
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲81 ▼68
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲47 ▼32
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲42 ▼31
Paris	Sunny	▲30 ▼18
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲39 ▼22
Rome	Ice	▲45 ▼32
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲54 ▼37
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲63 ▼44
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲31 ▼12
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲43 ▼30
Washington, DC	Rain	▲53 ▼37

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
4:42 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.3 Feet
7:24 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
1:20 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
9:16 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward south of Iwo To island from 25N147E to 19N137E. Scattered showers are found south and east of Iwo To island along and within 200 miles northwest of this front just south of the above feature from 25N147E curving southwestward to beyond 13N130 is a cold front transitioning to a shear line. Scattered showers are found along and within 75 miles northwest of this boundary. A cold front extends southwestward from near Midway Island at 25N180E to near Wake Island at 23N167E then continues as a shear line to end southeast of Yap at 6N140E. Cloudiness and rain are seen along and up to 150 miles northwest of the cold front. Patchy clouds and showers are present along and up to 150 miles northwest of the shear line to 11N147E then scattered showers are found between 7N and 11N from 140E to 147E. A near-equatorial trough stretches northwestward from EQ141E to beyond 2N130E. Converging winds near this trough are triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms well south of Koror and Yap or within 50 miles of a line from 1N140E to 2N130E. Another near-equatorial trough runs northwestward well south of Chuuk and Pohnpei from EQ156E to 7N142E. Scattered showers are occurring between the equator and 3N from 153E to 160E. Trade-wind disturbances are producing scattered showers near Kosrae within 120 miles of a line from 6N163E to 2N166E around Kwajalein between 7N and 10N from 164E to 169E and near Majuro within 100 miles of a line from 4N173E to 8N171E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:46 AM	6:15 PM
Friday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Saturday	6:46 AM	6:16 PM
Sunday	6:45 AM	6:17 PM
Monday	6:45 AM	6:17 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:13 PM	1:38 AM
Friday	2:02 PM	2:29 AM
Saturday	2:55 PM	3:20 AM
Sunday	3:49 PM	4:11 AM
Monday	4:45 PM	5:00 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP) C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN) C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) C05064 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6 C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6 C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL285 6:35am 9:15am 1, 3, 5, 7 DL297 4:25pm 7:15pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:40pm 1:15am+1 Daily DL286 7:40pm 12:20am+1 2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ119 4:00am 11:20am Daily via KIX OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ120 7:10pm 2:20am+1 Daily via KIX OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7 DL581 4:10am 7:30am 1, 5	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 2:20am+1 3, 6 DL580 10:10pm 2:55am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM C05076/183 3:10pm 9:40pm 1, 4, 7 via GUM C05076/193 3:10pm 11:00pm 2, 5 via GUM-Palau OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN C05072/PR111 9:55pm 7:50am+1 1, 5, 7 via GUM C05072/PR111 10:05pm 7:50am+1 3, 6 via GUM	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN DL172/288 8:00am 1:15am+1 Daily via NRT C0190/5077 10:55am 6:30pm 3, 6 via GUM C0190/5079 10:55am 9:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN PR110/C05071 10:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM C0192/5071 10:25pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM-Palau C0184/5071 11:10pm 7:50am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ704/603 11:40pm 2:20pm Daily via ICN C0184/5071 11:59pm 7:50am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 12:00pm 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 12:00pm 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN C05076/147 3:10pm 10:25pm 1, 5 via GUM OZ604/723 3:20pm 10:30pm Daily via ICN OZ604/749 3:20pm 10:50pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ724/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ750/603 1:00am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN C0180/5071 11:15pm 7:50am+1 1, 5 via GUM
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana	
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The <i>Saipan Tribune</i> is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)	

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



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Business

Hong Kong says economy slowed in 2011

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong's economic growth fell further in the final quarter of 2012 as global trade weakened, and the government forecast an anemic expansion this year.

The economy expanded by 3 percent in the three months ending in December, following a steady decline from 7.6 percent in the first quarter, Finance Secretary John Tsang said in an annual budget speech.

Inflation jumped to 5.3 percent from 2010's 1.7 percent as stimulus measures by major governments caused an influx of money into the territory, but pressures eased in the fourth quarter, Tsang said, according to a text released by the government.

Tsang forecast growth of no more than 1 to 3 percent for 2012. He said the government



Pro-democracy protesters dress as Chinese Fortune God during demonstration before Financial Secretary John Tsang will deliver the annual budget report at the Legislative Council in Hong Kong Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2012.

plans to spend 80 billion Hong Kong dollars (\$10.3 billion) on stimulus measures.

Hong Kong's open markets and status as a major trading center have made it one of Asia's most prosperous economies but also left it exposed to the plunge in U.S. and European demand. Hong Kong is also one of Asia's busiest ports, handling a large share of goods from China, the world's biggest exporter.

"Given the bleak economic prospects in Europe and the U.S., the risk of a sharp deterioration of the external environment is increasing," Tsang said.

"I am not optimistic about Hong Kong's export performance in the first half of this year, and if exports of goods were to plunge in the first quarter, the overall economy might take a downturn in that

quarter," he said.

Hong Kong is a Chinese territory but has a high degree of autonomy and its own currency and customs system.

Exports rebounded in 2010 following the global crisis but fell again in mid-2011, Tsang said. He said exports contracted in the third quarter and grew by just 3.6 percent for the full year.

Hong Kong chief executive Donald Tsang has warned that the territory faces an unusually severe shock due to the European debt crisis.

In an interview with broadcaster TVB from the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the chief executive said conditions are more worrisome than they were during the 1998 Asian financial crisis.

"It's rare to see all these three problems emerge at the same time," he said.

Will Facebook deliver an IPO surprise?

NEW YORK (AP)—Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg turns up at business conventions in a hoodie. "Cocky" is the word used to describe him most often, after "billionaire." He was Time's person of the year at 26.

So when he takes Facebook public, why would he follow the Wall Street rules?

The company is expected to file as early as Wednesday to sell stock on the open market in what will be the most talked-about initial public offering since Google in 2004, maybe since the go-go 1990s.

Around the nation, regular investors and IPO watchers are anticipating some kind of twist—perhaps a provision for the 800 million users of Facebook, a company that promotes itself as all about personal connections, to get in on the action.

"Pandemonium is what I expect in terms of demand for this stock," says Scott Sweet, senior managing partner at IPO Boutique, an advisory firm. "I don't think Wall Street would want to

anger Facebook users."

The most successful young technology companies have a history of doing things differently. Google's IPO prospectus contained a letter from its founders to investors that said the company believed in the motto "Don't be evil."

Facebook declined to comment, but Reena Aggarwal, a finance professor who has studied IPOs at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, believes Zuckerberg will emulate Google's philosophy, at least in principle.

Founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin wanted an IPO accessible to all investors, and said so in their first regulatory filing. Facebook may say something similar when it files to declare its intention to sell stock publicly.

Facebook is expected to raise as much as \$10 billion, which will value the company at \$75 billion to \$100 billion, making it one of the largest IPOs. A stock usually starts trading three to four months after the filing.

The highly anticipated filing will reveal how much Facebook intends to raise from the stock market, what it plans to do with the money and details on its own financial performance and future growth prospects.

Along with Wall Street investment banks, Google used a Dutch auction, named for a means of selling flowers in Holland, to sell its shares. It took private bids and allowed investors to say how many shares they wanted and what they were willing to pay.

The process wasn't smooth, though, and Google had to slash its expected offer price at the last minute. If you bought at the IPO, for roughly \$85 a share, you still did well: Google closed Tuesday at \$580.

More recently, when it filed for an IPO last June, Groupon, which emails daily deals on products and services to its members, added a letter from its 30-year-old founder, Andrew Mason.

"We are unusual and we

like it that way," the letter said. "We want the time people spend with Groupon to be memorable. Life is too short to be a boring company."

It's almost become conventional for tech companies to include an unconventional letter when they make their stock market debut. It's widely expected that Zuckerberg, in the very least measure of showmanship, will write one.

But IPO watchers wonder whether there might be a provision specifically designed to give the little-guy investor, even the casual Facebook user who doesn't invest, a piece of the debut.

"There is a feeling that there will be something unique in store for Facebook users," Aggarwal says.

When most companies go public, they let Wall Street investment banks handle everything, with the sweet ground-floor stock price reserved for big institutional investors.

But that probably won't do

for Facebook, created in a Harvard University dorm room eight years ago. Or Zuckerberg, whose antiestablishment credentials include spurning a \$15 billion takeover offer from Microsoft.

Few expect Zuckerberg to offer a Dutch auction because of the Google experience. But he is at least as unorthodox as Google's founders. People expect him to be in the driver's seat on Wall Street, rather than hand over the controls to bankers.

Facebook is a vital part of people's Internet lives and the

most successful company in the history of social media. Its closest competitor, Google+, has less than a tenth the active membership—60 million people.

"While there is no such thing as untouchable, Facebook is getting near there, with even Google imitating it," says Sweet, of IPO Boutique.

In "really hot IPOs," 90 percent of the shares go to institutional investors and 10 percent to everyday investors, Sweet says. It's a perk for the banks' biggest clients, like Fidelity Investments or T. Rowe Price or hedge funds.

Slim denies he has monopoly on Mexico telecom

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Telephone magnate Carlos Slim denied Tuesday that he has a monopoly on telecommunications in Mexico, disputing a report by an international economic forum that say a lack of competition has cost the country billions.

Slim, who is one of the world's richest people, said his phone companies have either kept prices the same or reduced them. His Telmex company controls 80 percent of Mexico's landline market, while his Telcel controls 70 percent of the mobile phone business.

The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said Monday that Mexicans overpaid for telecom-

munications services by more than \$13 billion a year from 2005 to 2009. It said a lack of competition cost Mexico \$25 billion a year in the same period.

Slim called those numbers "fantasy."

Telcel is the Mexican arm of America Mobile, Latin America's leading mobile-phone operator.

Slim denied that any of his businesses are monopolies.

"What does monopoly mean? One," he said, adding that "if we have less than 100 percent of the market it means that there are other competitors."

Asked about the potential en-

try into Mexico's mobile-phone market by the Mexican broadcasting giant Televisa, Slim said he didn't fear competition.

"We aren't afraid of competing with anyone," he said. "What we want is that they invest, that they don't take advantage of our investments."

Televisa, the world's largest producer of Spanish-language programming, announced last April that it would pay \$1.6 billion for a 50 percent share of the mobile-phone operator Iusacell. That's a property of the Salinas Group, which operates TV Azteca, the second biggest



Slim

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil hovers below \$99 after US crude supply jump

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices hovered below \$99 a barrel Wednesday in Asia as investors eyed a jump in U.S. crude inventories and signs of sluggish economic growth. Benchmark crude for March delivery was up 24 cents at \$98.72 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract fell 30 cents to settle at \$98.48 on Tuesday. Brent crude was up 20 cents at \$111.18 a barrel on the ICE Futures Exchange in London.

Ecuador announces \$1.7 billion oil investment

QUITO, Ecuador (AP)—Ecuador's energy minister says U.S. and Argentine companies are investing nearly \$1.7 billion to boost production in the country's two main oil fields by 40,000 barrels a day. Minister Wilson Pastor tells a TV station that the fields in Shushufindi and Libertador in the country's northern Amazon jungle now produce just under a third of what they did 40 years ago. Pastor says the U.S. company Schlumberger Ltd. and Argentina's Tecpetrol will invest in consortiums along with Sertecpet, an Ecuadorian partner.

Amazon 4Q results, outlook sends stock lower

NEW YORK (AP)—Shoppers spent more money online this holiday season than ever before, and yet, Amazon—the world's largest Internet retailer—failed to meet Wall Street's sales expectations with its latest financial results. In a surprise, the company's revenue fell nearly \$1 billion short of Wall Street's expectations, even as it grew 35 percent from a year earlier. The quarter included Amazon's headline-grabbing November launch of the Kindle Fire, its answer to Apple's iPad. Its net income also fell sharply and its guidance for the current quarter was disappointing. Investors punished the stock. Amazon's shares dropped \$17.44, or 9 percent, to \$177 in after-hours trading on Tuesday following the earnings announcement.

Nation

Romney wins big in Florida, routing Gingrich

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Mitt Romney routed Newt Gingrich in the Florida primary Tuesday night, rebounding smartly from an earlier defeat and taking a major step toward the Republican presidential nomination. Gingrich vowed to press on despite the one-sided setback.

Romney, talking unity like a nominee, said he was ready to take the Republican helm and “lead this party and our nation.” In remarks to cheering supporters, the former Massachusetts governor unleashed a strong attack on Democratic President Barack Obama and said the competitive fight for the GOP nomination “does not divide us, it prepares us” for the fall campaign.

“Mr. President, you were elected to lead, you chose to follow, and now it’s time to get out of the way,” he declared.

Returns from 98 percent of Florida’s precincts showed Romney with 46 percent of the vote to 32 percent for Gingrich, the former House speaker.

Former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum had 13 percent, and Texas Rep. Ron Paul 7 percent. Neither mounted a substantial effort in the state.

For the first time in the campaign, exit polls showed a gender gap, and it worked to Romney’s advantage.

He was leading Gingrich 52-28 among women voters and was winning men by a far smaller margin of 41-36.

Ominously for the thrice-married



Republican presidential candidate, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, greets supporters at his Florida primary night rally in Tampa, Fla., Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012.

Gingrich, only about half of women voters said they had a favorable view of him as a person, compared to about eight in 10 for Romney.

Nor was Romney’s victory a narrow one. His winning percentage approached 50 percent and a majority that would demolish Gingrich’s oft-stated contention that the voters who oppose Romney out-

number those who favor him.

Still, the former speaker said, “We’re going to contest everyplace and we are going to win.”

As in Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina, about half of Florida primary voters said the most important factor for them was backing a candidate who could defeat Obama in No-

vember, according to exit poll results conducted for The Associated Press and the television networks.

Not surprisingly, in a state with an unemployment rate hovering around 10 percent, about two-thirds of voters said the economy was their top issue. Nearly nine in 10 said they were falling behind or just keeping up. And half

Gingrich: It’s a 2-person race for GOP nomination

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Trounced in Florida, presidential candidate Newt Gingrich on Tuesday used the defeat to declare that he alone is the conservative alternative to GOP front-runner Mitt Romney.

Gingrich ignored the fact that the other two candidates in the race—Ron Paul and Rick Santorum—chose not to run aggressive campaigns in the state.

“It is now clear that this will be a two-person race between the conservative leader, Newt Gingrich, and the Massachusetts moderate, and the voters of Florida made that clear,” Gingrich said following returns that showed him trailing Romney badly.

Gingrich’s defiant pledge to continue on against Romney sets the stage for a bitter brawl for the Republican nomination that could last for months. Gingrich supporters Tuesday night hoisted

signs that read “46 States to Go.”

It was a message, the former House speaker said, to those eager to write his political obituary.

“I just want to reassure everyone, we are going to contest every place and we are going to win and we will be in Tampa as the nominee in August,” he said.

Signs pointed to an uphill fight. Gingrich spoke to a half-empty hotel ballroom in Orlando where reporters appeared to outnumber supporters. It was a turnabout for a candidate who just 10 days ago bounded to a decisive comeback victory in South Carolina. Gingrich arrived in Florida to huge crowds and a lead in the polls. But a pair of lackluster debate performances a bruising advertising assault by Romney took their toll.

Gingrich never mentioned Romney by name Tuesday night and offered the

winner of Florida’s primary no words of congratulation.

The two have been locked in an increasingly vicious fight for the Republican nod with Gingrich calling Romney dishonest and his campaign “pathetic.” Romney took off the gloves against Gingrich in Florida, assailing his work for Freddie Mac in a state hit hard by the housing bust. He also questioned Gingrich ties to President Ronald Reagan, which left the former Georgia congressman visibly irked.

Gingrich campaigned in Florida with Michael Reagan, son of the late president, as well as Herman Cain, his one-time GOP rival and a tea party favorite.

Despite the loss, Gingrich had appeal with the GOP’s conservative base. According to preliminary exit polls, Gingrich carried those voters seeking a true conservative. But he was plagued

by questions about electability in the general election. A majority of voters called Romney the candidate best able to defeat Democratic President Barack Obama. Only 3 in 10 said Gingrich could best win in November.

Gingrich now heads to Nevada, which is set to hold caucuses Saturday. Romney won Nevada when he sought the GOP nomination in 2008 and has had a campaign team there for months.

Gingrich’s fortunes could rest on Santorum, the former Pennsylvania senator who remains in the race despite weak showings in South Carolina and now Florida. He was a distant third in both contests. Santorum continues to pull conservative and evangelical support that would likely move to Gingrich if he left the race. Tuesday’s results could increase the pressure on Santorum to drop out.

US confirms possible release of Taliban from Gitmo

WASHINGTON (AP)—U.S. intelligence officials acknowledged Tuesday that the United States may release several Afghan Taliban prisoners from the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as an incentive to bring the Taliban to peace talks.

Meanwhile, Afghan officials told The Associated Press that a plan to give Afghanistan a form of legal custody over the men if they are released satisfied their earlier objection to sending the prisoners to a third country.

Director of National Intelligence Jim Clapper told Congress Tuesday that no decision had been made on whether to trade the five Taliban prisoners, now held at Guantanamo Bay as part of nascent peace talks with the Taliban. He and CIA Director David Petraeus did

not dispute that the Obama administration is considering transferring the five to a third country.

U.S. officials and others had previously spoken only vaguely, and usually anonymously, about the proposal to send the prisoners to Qatar, a Persian Gulf country that has asserted a central role in framing talks that might end the 10-year war in Afghanistan. The lead U.S. negotiator trying to coax the Taliban into talks had also publicly acknowledged the possibility of a release, but said there was no final decision.

The prisoners proposed for transfer include some of the detainees brought to Guantanamo during the initial days and weeks of the U.S. invasion that toppled the Taliban government in Afghanistan

in 2001. At least one has been accused in the massacre of thousands of Shiite Muslims in Afghanistan, according to U.S. and other assessments, but none are accused of directly killing Americans.

“I don’t think anybody harbors any illusions about it, but I think the position is to at least explore the potential for negotiating with them as a part of this overall resolution of the situation in Afghanistan,” Clapper said during a Senate Intelligence Committee hearing.

The Obama administration has recently embraced the possibility of negotiation with the Taliban much more openly, saying that although they remain cautious they are also encouraged that the militants may be ready to bargain. Peace talks, if they come to pass, would include

the elected Afghan government and, at least at the outset, representatives of the U.S. government. With nearly 100,000 troops in Afghanistan and a war and development budget in the billions of dollars, the U.S. remains the largest power broker in Afghanistan.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai supports a prisoner release as a means to build confidence among the Taliban militants that talks are worthwhile, but he had balked at the U.S.-backed plan to send them to Qatar instead of home to Afghanistan. That plan appeared to undercut his authority and offend Afghan sovereignty, Afghan officials said. Karzai yanked his ambassador from Qatar, saying Qatar had not kept him properly informed.

said that home foreclosures have been a major problem in their communities.

The winner-take-all primary was worth 50 Republican National Convention delegates, by far the most of any primary state so far. That gave Romney a total of 87, to 26 for Gingrich, 14 for Santorum and four for Paul, with 1,144 required to clinch the nomination.

ELECTION 2012	
Florida vote	
How presidential candidates fared in the Florida primary:	
As of 11 p.m. ET Tuesday	
Republicans	
Mitt Romney	46.4 %
Newt Gingrich	31.9
Rick Santorum	13.4
Ron Paul	7.0
Rick Perry*	0.4
Jon Huntsman*	0.4
Michele Bachmann*	0.2
Herman Cain*	0.2
Gary Johnson*	0.1
*Dropped out of race, or changed party	
Source: AP	© 2012 MCT

ACROSS THE NATION

Los Angeles teacher charged with molesting 23 kids

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Detectives say the elementary school teacher told the children it was a game. Once inside his third-grade classroom, he blindfolded them, gagged them and set cockroaches crawling on their faces. And then, Mark Berndt photographed them, creating hundreds of images that would eventually lead to his arrest. On Tuesday, Berndt, 61, was sitting in jail on charges that he committed lewd acts on 23 boys and girls, ages 6 to 10, between 2008 and 2010. None of them complained about Berndt’s behavior, authorities said. Police and school officials only learned of it when a film processor found Berndt’s photos more than a year ago. Since the discovery, the school district fired Berndt and police put him under surveillance.

World Trade Center design flaw could cost millions

NEW YORK (AP)—The agency building the new World Trade Center says a design flaw could add millions of dollars to the cost of the complex’s signature tower. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said Tuesday that the loading dock under One World Trade Center won’t be finished in time for tenants to move their equipment into the 104-story tower. So it’s building five temporary loading bays above ground. A temporary station that was built for the Port Authority Trans Hudson subway is blocking access to the underground loading area. The station can’t be dismantled to make way for underground freight areas until crews finish the permanent station.

Asia

China says separatists sparked violence in Sichuan

BEIJING (AP)—Rock-wielding Tibetan separatists who attacked police stations are responsible for sparking last week's deadly violence in Sichuan, the Chinese government said Wednesday in its first detailed account of the unrest.

The government-run China Daily newspaper quoted extensively from a Sichuan government statement that said two Tibetan rioters were killed and 24 police and firefighters were injured in two clashes. The account differs from those of Tibetan support groups outside the country who say police fired on protesters in three separate areas, killing at least six Tibetans.

According to the report, the Sichuan government said the first violence broke out Jan. 23 in Luhuo county when a group of separatists armed with rocks, batons and blades marched along a street shouting 'Tibetan independence' before trying to storm a police station.

It said the rioters attacked



An exiled Tibetan woman prays at a rally to show solidarity with Tibetans who have allegedly either died by self-immolation or were allegedly killed in Chinese police firing, during a protest march in New Delhi, India, Sunday, Jan. 29, 2012.

police cars, broke the windows of the police station and tried to steal guns from armed police officers.

The paper quoted the government as saying "the officers were forced to take actions to defend themselves according to the law."

"No country governed by law would tolerate such violence directed against police and aimed at separating the country," it said.

By the government's account, 10 officers and firefighters were injured and one rioter was killed in the first incident.

The next day in Sichuan's Seda county, it said, another group attacked a police station with molotov cocktails. It said one rioter was killed "after the police fought back." The report didn't say if police opened fire.

"Evidence shows that the violent attacks ... were long plotted by separatist forces," the paper quoted the government as saying.

The article also said sepa-

ratists have been trying to stir up unrest in the area and have "asked and encouraged monks to commit suicide by self-immolation."

For the past year, self-immolations have become a striking form of protest in the region. At least 16 monks, nuns and former clergy set themselves on fire after chanting for Tibetan freedom and the return of the Dalai Lama, who fled to India amid an abortive uprising against Chinese rule in 1959.

This is the region's most violent period since 2008, when deadly rioting in Tibet's capital, Lhasa, spread to Tibetan areas in adjoining provinces. China responded by flooding the area with troops and closing Tibetan regions entirely to foreigners for about a year. Special permission is still required for non-Chinese visitors to Tibet, and the Himalayan region remains closed off entirely for the weeks surrounding the March 14 anniversary of the riots that left 22 people dead.

Group: PH military helping accused general

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—An international human rights watchdog said Wednesday it has information that sympathetic Philippine military personnel were thwarting attempts by civilian authorities to capture a former army general accused of kidnapping two student activists.

Retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan has been on the run since he was charged in December with kidnapping two left-wing activists in 2006. The students remain missing.

Palparan, a former congressman who was close to former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, has denied any involvement. He is the highest-ranking

military official to face allegations of abuse that human rights groups say has long been tolerated in the Philippines.

Rights groups and a U.N. investigator have blamed security forces for the deaths and disappearances of about 1,000 activists between 2001 and 2010, when Arroyo was president.

Human Rights Watch said civilian officials told the group that Palparan is being protected by some military personnel and business owners who benefited from his heavy-headed tactics to suppress a long-running communist insurgency.

"There are concerns that the

military may be interfering in the civilian judicial process," the New York-based watchdog said in a statement.

Military officials have denied allegations of sheltering Palparan and two soldiers accused with him, and they have promised to cooperate in the investigation against them. In December, however, a group of active and retired military officials publicly defended Palparan and warned that his prosecution was causing "demoralization in the soldiers' ranks."

The other soldiers charged, Lt. Col. Felipe Antado and Staff Sgt. Edgardo Osorio, have surrendered. A court

has allowed them to be transferred from civilian to military custody despite protestation from Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who said the army failed to inform her where the two are being held, or if they are confined at all.

The conservative military has often acted as an influential power broker, and its members have launched several coup attempts since 1986.

The deputy Asia director for Human Rights Watch, Elaine Pearson, called on President Benigno Aquino III to put officers and soldiers on notice "that if they block civilian authorities in arresting Palparan, they too face

legal consequences."

"President Aquino should get the message to the military that the years of protecting Palparan for grievous abuses are over," she said.

Aquino's government has said it wants justice for the missing students, Karen Empeno and Sherlyn Cadapan, as part of a push to improve the Philippines' human rights record after a decade of rampant abuses during Arroyo's administration. Arroyo gave the

military a free hand in what it had called an all-out war against communist rebels.

About 5,000 rural-based communist guerrillas known as the New People's Army continue to attack military and police outposts, extort money and raid business establishments it accuses of exploiting workers. It is listed by U.S. and European governments as a terrorist organization, but has been engaged in peace talks with the Philippine government.

Aussie mom clueless about US murder victim's ashes

SYDNEY (AP)—The Australian mother of a 10-year-old disabled girl who was murdered by her American stepmother in North Carolina said Tuesday she has no idea what became of her daughter's ashes since the child's father brought them to Australia.

Attorney Shell Pearce said Monday that his client, Adam Baker, left the United States roughly two weeks ago at the behest of U.S. federal immigration officials, bringing the remains of his daughter, Zahra, with him for burial in Australia.

However, Vincent Picard, a spokesman for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said in an email Monday that Baker had "voluntarily departed" the U.S., which Pearce disputed.

Australia's Department of

Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement Tuesday that "Mr. Baker was deported from the United States to Australia in January." The department provided no other details.

Zahra's biological mother Emily Dietrich said her daughter's remains might have been buried in Australia without her knowledge.

"I don't have her remains and I don't even know if she's been buried at this point," Dietrich told Seven Network television.

Dietrich, from the rural town of Wagga Wagga in New South Wales state, last saw Zahra as a baby. Dietrich had been suffering postnatal depression and gave custody of her newborn to the father.

Dietrich rejected the prospect of dividing the ashes with

Adam Baker.

"The way that her murder was carried out, splitting her ashes just seemed so tasteless," Dietrich said. "She's already in pieces."

Police concluded that Zahra was dismembered after dying of causes that are still undetermined.

Dietrich was in North Carolina court in September last year to see Zahra's stepmother Elisa Baker sentenced to 18 years in prison after pleading guilty to second-degree murder in Zahra's death.

Adam Baker moved to North Carolina in 2008 after marrying Elisa, whom he met online.

In October 2010, Baker and his wife reported that Zahra, who had a prosthetic leg and hearing aids after a battle with cancer, was missing from their home in Hickory. The story that Zahra had

been kidnapped quickly fell apart, and Elisa Baker was jailed on a charge of interfering with a police investigation.

Police eventually found some of Zahra's remains, although they never located her head.

Pearce said he didn't want to reveal Baker's exact location in Australia.

Baker was facing misdemeanor charges in the United States which were unrelated to his daughter's death. Picard said local authorities knew of the plans for him to return to Australia before the cases were resolved.

"Local authorities were notified of Mr. Baker's return plans at least 48 hours prior to his departure and indicated that they had no interest in pursuing his case," Picard wrote.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Officials: Pakistani jets kill 31 militants

PARACHINAR, Pakistan (AP)—Government officials say Pakistani fighter jets bombed militant positions in two different areas along the Afghan border, killing 31 suspected insurgents. Political administrators Wajid Khan and Ameer Gul say the strikes occurred Wednesday morning in the Orakzai and Kurram tribal areas. It was not possible to independently confirm the information because the areas are effectively off-limits to reporters.

Afghan in army uniform kills NATO service member

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A man wearing an Afghan army uniform shot and killed a NATO service member, the international military coalition said Wednesday, the latest in a rising number of similar attacks. NATO did not provide any other details about the killing, which took place on Tuesday in southern Afghanistan. It was the fourth time since Dec. 28 that an Afghan soldier - or an insurgent posing as one - has turned his weapon on the international troops working to train the national security forces.

Another Chinese dissident on trial for subversion

BEIJING (AP)—Prosecutors cited a Chinese dissident's poem urging his countrymen to go to a public square and make a stand as evidence Tuesday in a trial accusing him of inciting to subvert state power, the man's lawyer said. Dissident Zhu Yufu is among a group of writers and intellectuals targeted by Chinese authorities in a crackdown aimed at preventing Arab Spring-style popular uprisings. Three other dissidents have received nine- and 10-year prison terms for subversion or the related charge of inciting subversion over the last two months.

World

Syria troops push back rebels as UN showdown looms

BEIRUT (AP)—Syrian troops crushed pockets of rebel soldiers Tuesday on the outskirts of Damascus and the U.N. Security Council took up a draft resolution demanding that President Bashar Assad halt the violence and yield power.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told the Security Council that action to end the violence in Syria would be different from U.N. efforts to pacify Libya.

"I know that some members

here may be concerned that the Security Council is headed toward another Libya," she said. "That is a false analogy."

"It is time for the international community to put aside our own differences and send a clear message of support to the people of Syria," Clinton said.

Russia, one of Assad's strongest backers, has signaled it would veto any U.N. action against Damascus, fearing it could open the door to eventual international military involve-

ment, the way an Arab-backed U.N. resolution led to NATO airstrikes in Libya.

However, the Arab League emphasized that international military action was not being sought.

"We are attempting to avoid any foreign intervention, particularly military intervention" in Syria, Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby said. "We have always stressed full respect of the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian people."

Russia has stood by Assad as he tries to crush an uprising that began nearly 11 months ago. In October, Moscow vetoed the first Security Council attempt to condemn Syria's crackdown and has shown little sign of budging in its opposition.

Moscow's stance is motivated in part by its strategic and defense ties, including weapons sales, with Syria. Russia also rejects what it sees as a world order dominated by the U.S.

The diplomatic showdown

came as Syrian government forces took back control of the eastern suburbs of the capital, Damascus, after rebel soldiers briefly captured the area in a startling advance last week.

The fact that rebels made it to the doorstep of Damascus, the seat of Assad's power, was a dangerous development for the regime. The military launched a swift offensive Monday and on Tuesday crushed the remaining resistance in Zamalka and Arbeen.

But the suburbs were not entirely quiet. On a government-sponsored media trip, Syrian journalists heard at least seven explosions Tuesday from the eastern suburb of Rankous. It was not clear what caused the blasts.

Violence also was reported in the Baba Amr neighborhood of Homs in central Syria, a hotbed of opposition to the regime. Activist Mohammed Saleh said he heard hours of shelling and machine-gun fire, and thick black smoke was rising in the distance.

The smoke was believed to be from a pipeline that was struck, but details were not clear. Activists said regime forces' fire hit the pipeline, but that could not be confirmed.

The U.N. estimated several weeks ago that more than 5,400 people have been killed in the Syrian government crackdown, but has not been able to update the figure. The death toll from Monday's offensive was around 100 people, making it among

the bloodiest days since the uprising began in March, according to the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Local Coordination Committees, an opposition group.

Activists said Tuesday's death toll was at least seven, although the LCC put the figure at up to 28. Syria prevents independent reporting, making it difficult to confirm events on the ground.

The bloodshed in Syria has increased in recent days as Western and Arab countries stepped up pressure on Russia over Security Council action.

The draft resolution demands that Assad halt the crackdown and implement an Arab League peace plan that calls for him to hand over power to his vice president and allow creation of a unity government to clear the way for elections.

If Assad fails to comply within 15 days, the council would consider "further measures," a reference to a possible move to impose economic or other sanctions.

Earlier Tuesday, a French official said the draft U.N. resolution had a "comfortable majority" of support from 10 of the Security Council's 15 members, meaning Russia or China would have to use their veto power to stop it.

Russia has agreed to negotiate on the draft, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in accordance with department rules.

Scientists puzzled by region outside the solar system

By ALICIA CHANG
AP SCIENCE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A glimpse beyond our solar system reveals the neighborhood just outside the sun's influence is different and stranger than expected, scientists reported Tuesday.

One oddity is the amount of oxygen. There are more oxygen atoms floating freely in the solar system than in the immediate interstellar space, or the vast region between stars.

Scientists were unsure why, but they said it's possible some of the life-supporting element could be hidden in dust or ice.

"We discovered this big puzzle—that the matter just outside of our solar system doesn't look like the material inside," said David McComas of the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, Texas.

The discovery came from NASA's Interstellar Boundary Explorer spacecraft, which launched in 2008 to study the chaotic boundary where the solar wind from the sun clashes with cold gases from interstellar space.

Circling 200,000 miles above

Earth, the Ibx spacecraft spots particles streaming into the solar system. A protective bubble surrounding around the sun and planets prevents dangerous cosmic radiation from seeping through, but neutral particles can pass freely, allowing Ibx to map their distribution.

The presence of less oxygen outside the solar system should not have any bearing on the search for Earth-like planets, scientists involved in the exoplanet hunt said.

There's plenty of oxygen in all the stars in the galaxy and in the material out of which stars and planets form, Geoff Marcy of University of California, Berkeley said in an email.

While Ibx probes the edge of the solar system from Earth orbit, NASA's long-running, nuclear-powered twin Voyager spacecraft are at the fringes. Launched in 1977, the spacecraft have been exploring the solar system boundary since 2004.

Scientists have said it'll be months or years before Voyager 1 exits the solar system and becomes the first manmade probe to cross into interstellar space.

Isolated Peru tribe makes uncomfortable contact

By FRANK BAJAK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LIMA, Peru (AP)—Peruvian authorities say they are struggling to keep outsiders away from a clan of previously isolated Amazon Indians who began appearing on the banks of a jungle river popular with environmental tourists last year.

The behavior of the small group of Mashco-Piro Indians has puzzled scientists, who say it may be related to the encroachment of loggers and by low-flying aircraft from nearby natural gas and oil exploration in the southeastern region of the country.

Clan members have been blamed for two bow-and-arrow attacks on people near the riverbank in Madre de Dios state where officials say the Indians were first seen last May.

One badly wounded a forest ranger in October. The following month, another fatally pierced the heart of a local Matsigenka Indian, Nicolas "Shaco" Flores, who had long maintained a relationship with the Mashco-Piro.

The advocacy group Survival International released photos Tuesday showing clan members on the riverbank, describing the pictures as the "most detailed sightings of uncontacted Indians ever recorded on camera."

The British-based group provided the photos exactly a year after releasing aerial photos from Brazil of another tribe classified as uncontacted, one of about 100 such groups it says exist around the world.

One of the Mashco-Piro photos was taken by a bird watcher in August, Survival International



This Nov. 2011 image made available by Survival International on Tuesday Jan. 31, 2012, shows members of the Mashco-Piro tribe, photographed at an undisclosed location near the Manu National Park in southeastern Peru.

al said. The other two were shot by Spanish archaeologist Diego Cortijo on Nov. 16, six days before Flores was killed.

Cortijo, a member of the Spanish Geographical Society, was visiting Flores while on an expedition in search of petroglyphs and said clan members appeared across the river from Flores' house, calling for him by name.

Flores could communicate with the Mashco-Piro because

he spoke two related dialects, said Cortijo, who added that Flores had previously provided clan members with machetes and cooking pots.

The Mashco-Piro tribe is believed to number in the hundreds and lives in the Manu National Park that borders Diamante, a community of more than 200 people where Flores lived.

Although it's not known what provoked the Mashco-Piro clan to leave the relative safety of

their tribe's jungle home, Beatriz Huerta, an anthropologist who works with Peru's agency for indigenous affairs, speculated their habitat is becoming increasingly less isolated.

The upper Madre de Dios region where the tribe lives has been affected by logging, she said. "They are removing wood very close."

Meanwhile, Huerta said, naturalists in the area and Manu National Park officials told her during a recent visit that a rise in air traffic related to natural gas and oil exploration in the region is adversely affecting native hunting grounds, forcing increasing migration by nomadic tribes.

The clan that showed up at the river is believed to number about 60, including some 25 adults, said Carlos Soria, a professor at Lima's Catholic University who ran Peru's park protection agency last year.

"It seemed like they wanted to draw a bit of attention, which is a bit strange because I know that on other occasions they had attacked people," Cortijo said by phone from Spain. "It seemed they didn't want us to go near them, but I also know that the only thing that they wanted was machetes and cooking pots."

Cortijo said the group lingered by the river a few minutes, apparently to see if a boat would pass by so they could ask for some tools, something authorities say they had done in the past.

"The place where they are seen is one of heavy transit" of river cargo and tourist passage, and so the potential for more violent encounters remains high, Soria said.

WORLD BRIEFS

Mexican general, 29 soldiers on trial for homicide

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A Mexican army general and 29 soldiers under his command in a town on the border with Texas are being tried on charges of torture, homicide, drug trafficking and other crimes, a top government official confirmed Tuesday. Interior Secretary Ale-

jandro Poiré said that the crimes charged in the case are "deplorable and reprehensible" and that the troops are being tried in a military court. Details about Gen. Manuel Moreno Avina and his subordinates' alleged reign of terror in the town of Ojinaga, across from Presidio, Texas, were first reported by the newspaper Reforma, which had access to some

of the soldiers' testimony.

1 dead as Senegal protest turns violent

DAKAR, Senegal (AP)—Police opened fire with tear gas on demonstrators Tuesday, leaving at least one person dead in Senegal's capital where hundreds had gathered to protest a court ruling allowing the nation's elderly leader to run for another term. Private

radio station RFM said that a man was run over by the police's armored-personnel carrier. An Associated Press reporter saw the young man fall to the ground after the tank-like truck forced its way through the knot of protesters. Police launched their assault after demonstrators began chanting, "Palace! Palace!" indicating that they planned to march on the presidential palace.

Focus

New Delhi ignores own quake peril warnings

By **MUNEEZA NAQVI**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW DELHI (AP)—The ramshackle neighborhoods of northeast Delhi are home to 2.2 million people packed along narrow alleys. Buildings are made from a single layer of brick. Extra floors are added to dilapidated buildings not meant to handle their weight. Tangles of electrical cables hang precariously everywhere.

If a major earthquake struck India's seismically vulnerable capital, these neighborhoods—India's most crowded—would collapse in an apocalyptic nightmare. Waters from the nearby Yamuna River would turn the water-soaked subsoil to jelly, which would intensify the shaking.

The Indian government knows this and has done almost nothing about it.

An Associated Press examination of government documents spanning five decades reveals a pattern of warnings and recommendations that have been widely disregarded. Successive governments made plans and promises to prepare for a major earthquake in the city of 16.7 million, only to abandon them each time.

The Delhi government's own estimates say nine out of every 10 buildings in the city are at risk of moderate or significant quake damage, yet the basic disaster response plan it had promised to complete nearly three years ago remains unfinished, there are nearly no earthquake awareness drills in schools and offices and tens of thousands of housing units are built every year without any earthquake safety checks.

Fearing many buildings could lie in ruins after a quake, the Delhi government began work in 2005 with U.S. government assistance to reinforce just five buildings—including a school and a hospital—it would need to begin a rudimentary relief operation to deal with the dead, wounded and

homeless. Six years later, only one of those buildings is earthquake-ready.

"At the end of the day, people at the helm of affairs are not doing anything," said Anup Karanth, an earthquake engineering expert.

In its attitudes to disaster preparedness India is like many other poor nations—aware of the danger but bogged down by both sheer inertia and more immediate demands on its resources.

But Delhi faces immense earthquake risks. Last September, two minor jolts sent thousands of scared residents into the streets, and experts say a big one looms on the horizon.

As far back as 1960, after a moderate quake cut power and plunged Delhi—then a city of 2.7 million—into darkness, the Geological Survey of India advised that all large buildings in the capital needed to have a plan for earthquake safety.

A series of reports by other agencies have expanded on that conclusion in recent years, but both the city and national governments have ignored almost all of the recommendations.

Some reports were ignored because of sheer apathy, others because of shifting priorities. In a city and country growing at lightning speed with huge problems of poverty and hunger that need more immediate solutions, earthquake preparedness has simply never been at the top of the list. Some plans begun with good intentions simply fell by the wayside.

That's what happened to the 2005 plan to prepare five important buildings in the capital for an earthquake.

Government engineers were sent to California to train. But the follow-

ing year—with only the school made earthquake ready—all the engineers were taken off the project. They were reassigned to build stadiums for the 2010 Commonwealth Games, an athletic competition held in Delhi, said M. Shashidhar Reddy, the vice chairman of India's National Disaster Management Agency.

The scale of the problem "really hasn't sunk into the minds of the people," Reddy said.

Just last year, a Delhi government agency ordered all new home buyers to get a building safety certificate that would mark their homes as structurally sound before registering property. But it later withdrew the order, saying there weren't enough engineers trained to conduct such inspections.

"That's like saying let's not have any traffic rules because we don't have enough policemen," said Hari Kumar, who heads Geohazards India, an organization that promotes earthquake awareness.

India, a still developing country plagued by corruption, isn't alone in being unprepared. More than 80 percent of deaths from building collapses in earthquakes in the last three decades occurred in corrupt and poor countries, according to a 2011 study published in the science journal *Nature*.

The study by Roger Bilham, a geologist at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and Nicholas Ambraseys, a civil and environmental engineer at Imperial College London, compared the

loss of life in two magnitude 7.0 earthquakes in 2010.

In Haiti, 300,000 died; in New Zealand none did, though a subsequent 6.1 quake there in early 2011 killed 182.

New Zealand, a developed nation, tied for first

as the least corrupt in Transparency International's most recent Corruption Perceptions Index. Much poorer Haiti came in 175th out of 178 countries.

In Turkey, which ranked 61st, a 2010 report revealed that the earthquake-prone nation had failed to enforce stricter building codes put in place after a 1999 earthquake killed 18,000 people. Last year, two earthquakes of magnitude 7.2 and 5.7 flattened some 2,000 buildings, killed 644 people and left thousands homeless.

In contrast, Japan, which was 14th on the corruption scale, requires that all structures meet a 1981 building code and offers subsidies to retrofit buildings to meet more stringent guidelines set in 1995. About 75 percent of homes and public buildings meet the newer standards.

In India, which ranked 95th, contractors routinely flout regulations, use substandard material and add illegal floors to buildings, while bribing government inspectors to look the other way, said Reddy, the disaster management official. A 2001 quake in the western state of Gujarat killed more than 13,000.

Delhi, which sits near a highly seismically active area, is ranked four out of five on a seismic threat scale used in India.

Geologists believe the Central Himalayan Gap, a 310-mile (500 kilometer) stretch between Nepal and India, is ripe for a major quake. A 6.8 quake along the fault in March 1999 damaged many buildings in Delhi, just 125 to 300 miles (200 to 500 kilometers) from the gap.

Studies show such a large buildup of energy that a shifting of the tectonic plates could cause an 8.7-magnitude earthquake, Bilham said.

Experts also fear the potential damage from a smaller quake closer to the capital. The city lies between two fault lines, and a 4.2 quake in September

woke up residents, with many fleeing their buildings. The same month, a magnitude 6.8 quake in India's remote northeast was also felt in the capital.

Either type of quake would cause moderate damage to an estimated 85.5 percent of Delhi's buildings and severe damage to another 6.5 percent, Delhi's disaster management authority said in a 2010 vulnerability assessment. It could also open cracks in the ground several centimeters wide and spread "fear and panic," the report said.

It was India's Department of Meteorology that found northeast Delhi particularly vulnerable in a never-released 2005 study obtained by the AP. That "microzone" study divided the city into nine segments to evaluate the possible impact of an earthquake in each.

While the microzone study is a positive step, the report is only rudimentary and most builders haven't even heard of it, said earthquake engineering expert Karanth, who as a student lived through the Gujarat quake.

India has developed national standards for constructing earthquake-resistant buildings, but they are not mandatory and widely ignored, said Kumar of Geohazards.

Meanwhile, many residents don't realize the danger, or wrongly believe they are safe from it.

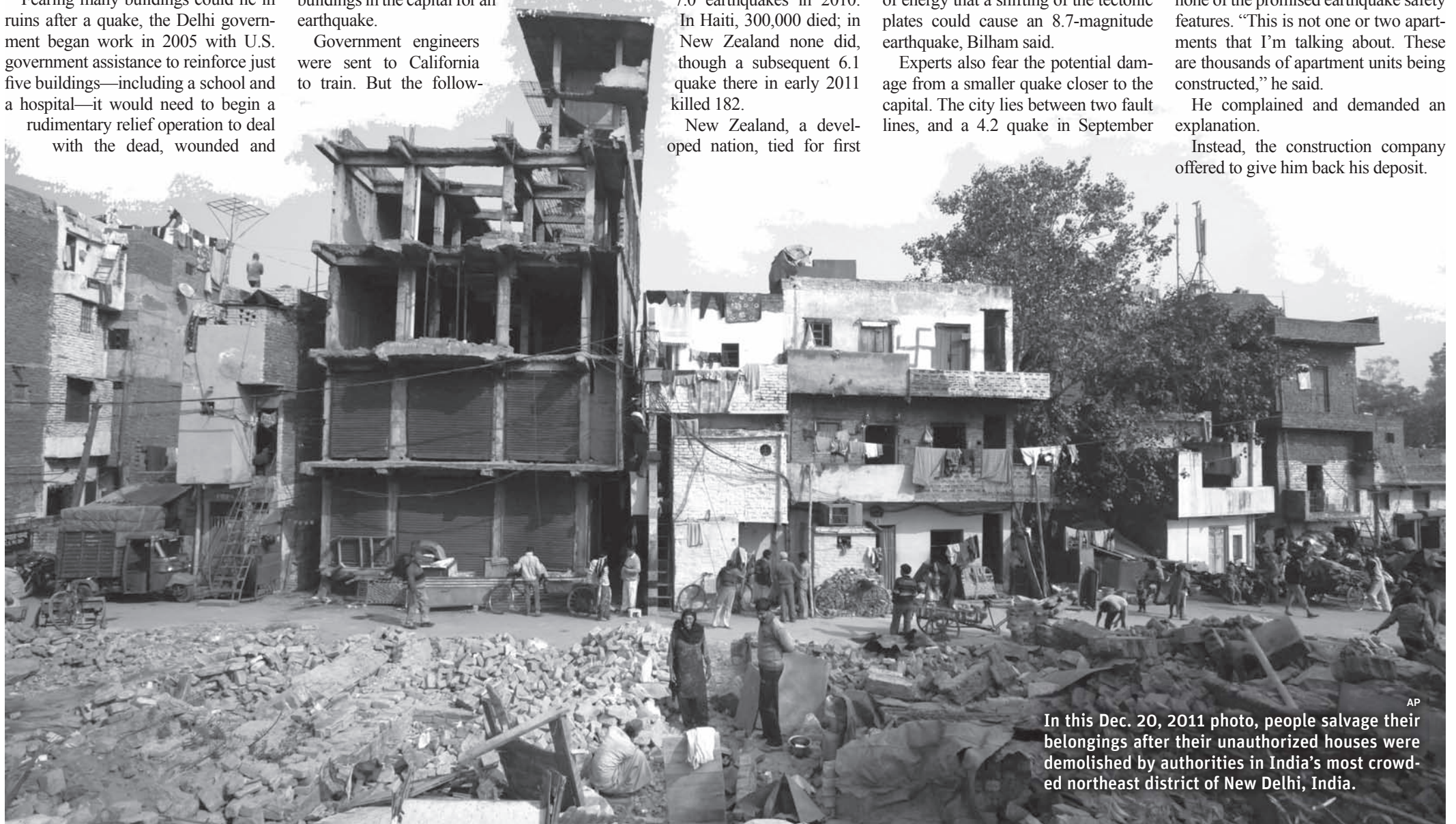
When Karanth decided to buy an apartment in 2010, he picked a builder who promised to deliver an earthquake-resistant building. He visited the site often, took photographs of the construction and talked to the engineers in charge.

Last year, he realized the project had none of the promised earthquake safety features. "This is not one or two apartments that I'm talking about. These are thousands of apartment units being constructed," he said.

He complained and demanded an explanation.

Instead, the construction company offered to give him back his deposit.

AP impact



In this Dec. 20, 2011 photo, people salvage their belongings after their unauthorized houses were demolished by authorities in India's most crowded northeast district of New Delhi, India.

Environment

Nearly \$10M up for grabs to clean up beaches nationwide

» EPA launches improved website for beach advisories and closures

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be providing \$9.8 million in grants to 38 states, territories, and tribes to help protect the health of swimmers at America's beaches. The agency also launched an improved website for beach advisories and closings, which will allow the public to more quickly and easily access the most current water quality and pollution testing information for more than 6,000 U.S. beaches.

The website, called BEACON, has the capability to update as frequently as every two hours based on new data

provided by states, territories and tribes. Users will have access to mapped location data for beaches and water monitoring stations, monitoring results for various pollutants such as bacteria and algae, and data on public notification of beach water quality advisories and closures. For the first time, users can also access reports that combine notifications and water quality monitoring data. The enhanced system also uses enhanced map navigation and report display tools.

The majority of beach advisories and closures in the United States are due to water

test results indicating bacterial contamination, which can make people sick. Bacterial contamination comes from a variety of sources. Some examples are sewer overflows, untreated stormwater runoff, boating wastes, wildlife and pet waste, and malfunctioning septic systems.

During each swimming season, state and local health and environmental protection agencies monitor the quality of water at the nation's beaches. When bacteria levels in the water are too high, these agencies notify the public by posting beach warnings or closing the beach.

The grants will help local authorities monitor beach water quality and notify the public of conditions that may be unsafe

for swimming.

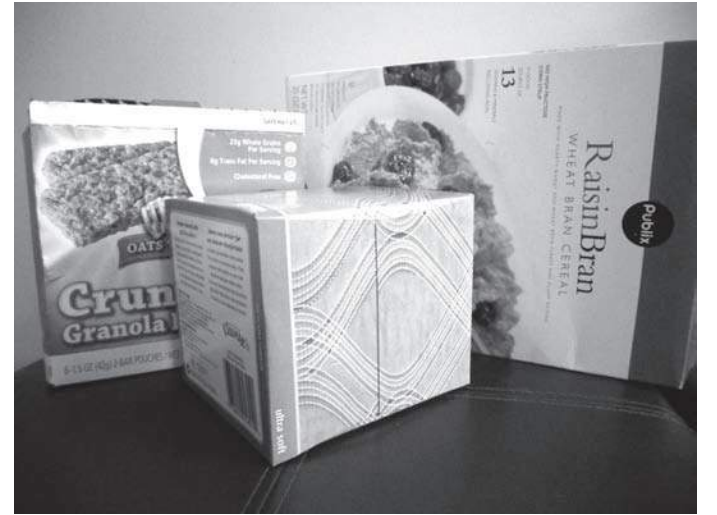
This is the 12th year that EPA is providing beach grant funds, bringing the total amount EPA has made available to nearly \$111 million. As a result, the number of monitored beaches has more than tripled to more than 3,600 in 2010. Grant applications must be received within 60 days of publication of EPA's notice in the Federal Register. EPA expects to award the grants later this year.

ON THE NET

■ View EPA's enhanced beach advisory and closing information: <http://watersgeo.epa.gov/BEACON2/>

■ More information on the grants: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/beachgrants/index.cfm

Top 7 ways to be less trashy



TERRI BENNETT ENTERPRISES/MCT

Recycle that paperboard! Paperboard is the thin cardboard packaging that holds so many of the items we buy think cereal boxes, packaging for toys, and even tissue boxes.

By TERRI BENNETT
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS



Who really wants to contribute to our growing landfills? There are things

we toss away everyday that make up the bulk of our trash and they don't even belong in our garbage bins. Here are my Top 7 ways to be less trashy so you can get started today.

1) Recycle That Paperboard!

Paperboard is the thin cardboard packaging that holds so many of the items we buy — think cereal boxes, packaging for toys, and even tissue boxes. Nearly all curbside recycling programs accept paperboard but many won't accept pizza boxes. Why? That paperboard generally contains greasy food residue that is not good for the recycling process.

2) Paper is Valuable

Do you recycle all the paper that comes into your home? You know — school work, junk mail, magazines and the like? Remember, ALL paper is recyclable and that includes colored paper and those envelopes with the plastic window. The general rule for paper is that if it's free of food waste, it can be recycled.

3) Don't Waste the Leftovers

It might shock you to find out that a third of what goes in our trash bags is food. Instead of letting it go to rot in a landfill, consider composting it instead. Visit DoYourPart.com/Columns for a short video on how to start your own composting routine and create the perfect free food for your lawn and garden.

4) Give Electronics a Second Life

E-waste is the fastest growing disposal problem in this country. Electronics contain heavy metals that are both dangerous and valuable. My go-to websites for electronic buyback programs and qualified recyclers

are listed at DoYourPart.com/Columns.

5) Reuse, Reuse, Reuse!

Don't trash what you can reuse. Whether you turn baby food jars into paint containers, milk cartons into bird feeders, or this year's holiday cards into next year's gift tags — there are plenty of ways to get creative with things that might ordinarily wind up in the trash. This goes for sporting equipment, too. There are many shops that specialize in selling gently worn and used items.

6) What Are You (Not) Wearing?

Well cared for clothes hold a lot of value and can be sold to others through consignment shops or online sites such as eBay. If you're looking to donate them, consider Goodwill, Salvation Army, battered women's shelters, or Dress for Success programs. And get this, clothes that are torn but not contaminated with chemicals, can still be donated to Goodwill. These items are sold in bulk to clothing recyclers.

7) Don't Shop For Trash

Think twice before buying items such as paper plates, bottles of water, and food in individual serving sizes. There are less trashy options such as renting or borrowing extra party supplies, buying in bulk, and using reusable containers. That way, those items don't spend decades waiting to decompose in our landfills.

Throughout the month of February, we are committed to helping you reduce the amount of trash you generate. Visit us at DoYourPart.com or Facebook to start doing your part today!

Terri Bennett is a veteran TV meteorologist, author, and founder of DoYourPart, everyday green living ideas that are better for you and the planet. Send questions to terri@doyourpart.com and follow DoYourPart on Facebook and Twitter.

Pythons likely wiping out Glades mammals, study finds



In this 2009 photo provided by the National Park Service, a Burmese python is wrapped around an American alligator in Everglades National Park, Fla.

By CURTIS MORGAN
THE MIAMI HERALD

MIAMI—For the first time, scientists have put numbers to the toll Burmese pythons have had on native wildlife in the Everglades.

But one word can sum it up: carnage.

In the decade since the giant constrictors started showing up in significant numbers, mammals once among the most common in Everglades National Park have declined dramatically, according to a study published online Monday in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

The study, based on night field surveys conducted over 10 years, found three animals had all but disappeared. Opossum sightings fell 98.9 percent. Raccoons—once so abundant park managers warned visitors to safeguard food from roaming groups of the wily thieves—dropped 99.3 percent. Marsh rabbits, brown bunnies frequently seen foraging along

roads in the pre-python past, didn't appear at all. Observations of bobcats, foxes and deer all also fell precipitously.

"We started this study saying, man, it appears we're not seeing many mammals," said Michael Dorcas, a biology professor at Davidson College in North Carolina and the study's lead author. "When we actually did the calculations, we were astonished by the magnitude of the declines."

The study suggests a near-collapse of mammal populations in the park and points to the python as prime suspect.

Frank Mazzotti, a wildlife ecology professor at the University of Florida, likened the study to a grand jury investigation—an important initial finding that shows mammal numbers shrinking at the same time the park's python population was booming, rising from two captures in 2000 to 322 in 2010.

"We examined all the evidence and there is enough to indict pythons but we haven't gone to trial yet," said Maz-

zotti, one of 11 university and federal government researchers who co-authored the peer-reviewed study.

He cautioned that research is needed to refine and confirm the impact of the snakes. Other factors, such as changes in Everglades water levels, could potentially have contributed to the mammal decline as well, he said.

Still, the study finds the link strong, noting little support for other causes of the mammal decline. There were no known diseases or significant environmental changes, such as losses of important habitat or shifts in water management regimes.

"Our data are consistent in any number of ways with python as the primary reason or maybe the only reason, either directly or indirectly," said Dorcas, author of the book "Invasive Pythons in the United States."

The Obama administration pointed to the findings as more justification for the decision earlier this month to

ban the import and interstate sale of Burmese pythons, two types of African rock pythons and yellow anacondas.

"Pythons are wreaking havoc on one of America's most beautiful, treasured and naturally bountiful ecosystems," said Marcia McNutt, director of the U.S. Geological Survey, whose scientists contributed to the study. "Right now, the only hope to halt further python invasion into new areas is swift, decisive and deliberate human action."

The study was based on 313 night-time surveys of main roads in Everglades National Park conducted between 2003 and 2011, as well as 26 surveys at sites along the park border and in adjacent federally protected lands. The declines were in comparison to similar surveys conducted in the park in 1996, before pythons were regularly captured in the park.

In the surveys, which covered a total of nearly 39,000 road miles, researchers counted both live and road-kill animals.

Life & Style

First lady cheers Mitt Romney—for his singing

BURBANK, California (AP)—Mitt Romney's unexpected singing on the campaign trail has won him at least one Democratic fan—Michelle Obama.

Jay Leno asked the first lady about Romney's musical talent on the "Tonight Show" Tuesday, after the Republican presidential candidate surprised supporters in Florida with an on-pitch version of "America the Beautiful"

on Monday.

"It's beautiful. And it is America's song, and it's a song that's meant to be sung by every American," the first lady said in a taped appearance for the NBC show.

Leno told her, "That is right, regardless of political affiliation."

The first lady came to Leno's stage to promote her initiative for fitness and healthy eating for children, and she's been taunting

the comedian to overcome his aversion for vegetables. Leno once told a magazine he hadn't eaten a vegetable since 1969.

Earlier, Obama poked fun at the TV talk show host in a Twitter post, hinting she'd "get Jay to eat some veggies." Instead, she surprised him with some apples, and the comedian said he hadn't eaten one since 1984.

The first lady urged him to dip it in honey made from bee-

hives in the White House garden: "It will help it go down easier," she said.

"White House honey? That sounds bad," Leno told her, before taking a nibble. "You know, with a different president that could mean a whole different thing, 'a little White House honey.'"

The first lady is on a two-day swing through California where she'll promote her "Let's

Move!" health campaign and help Democrats raise money for the upcoming elections.

She told Leno she's not doing anything special to prepare for what's expected to be a tough re-election campaign for her husband, President Barack Obama.

"You know, there's really no way to mentally prepare for it. You take each day as it comes," she said.

Clear Channel to break into TV with Seacrest

By RYAN NAKASHIMA
AP BUSINESS WRITER

DANA POINT, California (AP)—Radio broadcasting giant Clear Channel is breaking into the TV production business.

The company announced Tuesday that it is taking a minority stake in the production company of "American Idol" host Ryan Seacrest.

Ryan Seacrest Media produces "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" and other spin-offs involving the celebrity family. Its other shows include "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution."

In a separate deal, Clear Channel is joining with its majority investors, Thomas H. Lee Partners and Bain Capital, in committing \$300 million to work with Seacrest's company to identify, acquire and develop innovative media companies.

At an All Things D confer-



Host Ryan Seacrest, left, and executive producer Ken Warwick, right, participate in the American Idol panel at the Fox Broadcasting Company Television Critics Association Winter Press Tour in Pasadena, Calif. on Sunday, Jan. 8, 2012.

ence Tuesday, Clear Channel CEO Bob Pittman said the new venture will aim to break into the TV production market and use Clear Channel's massive

radio network to help promote the shows.

He said the same formula helped launch the Fox network in the late 1980s.

"Their secret weapon was they used radio to promote their new shows," Pittman said. "So today, why can't we use our own advertising for Ryan's shows and give them a lift?"

Seacrest will remain majority owner of his company, which will keep producing shows for network and studio partners such as Comcast Corp.'s NBCUniversal.

"We aim to build Ryan Seacrest Media into a leading multimedia company with diversified assets and interests," Seacrest said in a statement. "The entertainment industry is thriving with innovation more than ever before."

The announcement is the lat-

est move by Clear Channel to spread its reach into forms of distribution beyond its more than 850 radio stations and network of outdoor billboards.

Last year, Clear Channel Radio, a subsidiary of CC Media Holdings Inc., launched the online radio service iHeart Radio to compete with market leader Pandora Media Inc. In mid-January, Clear Channel Radio changed its corporate name to Clear Channel Media and Entertainment.

Pittman has said the company aims to reach audiences in all formats and devices.

Since joining Clear Channel with a personal \$5 million investment in November 2010, Pittman has tried to expand the company's reach beyond tradi-

tional radio. Pittman was named CEO of CC Media Holdings in October. Previously, he was CEO of MTV Networks and chief operating officer of what is now AOL Inc.,

The company was taken private in 2008 by Thomas H. Lee and Bain but has struggled under the debt load created by the acquisition. The company's long-term debt reached about nearly \$20 billion at the end of September.

All Things D, a website owned by News Corp.'s The Wall Street Journal, hosts several conferences a year. The latest version, "D: Dive Into Media," focuses on the intersection between traditional media companies and technology.

Neil Young: Steve Jobs listened to vinyl

By RYAN NAKASHIMA
AP BUSINESS WRITER

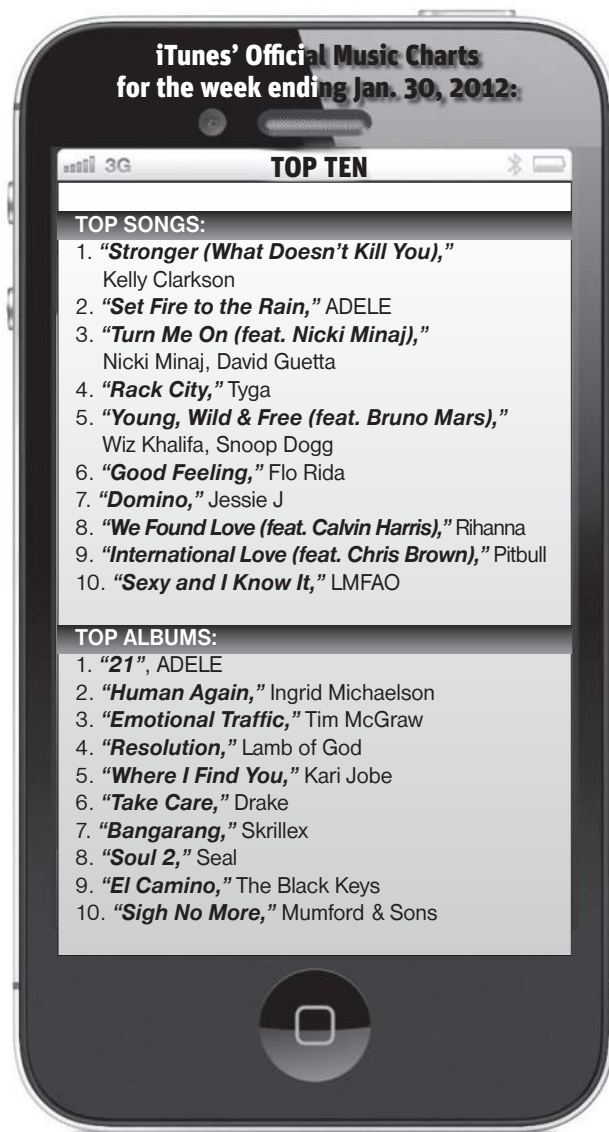
DANA POINT, California (AP)—Legendary rocker Neil Young took his campaign for higher-fidelity digital sound to the stage of a technology conference Tuesday, saying a giant of the industry was on his side: the late Steve Jobs.

Young said the Apple co-founder was such a fan of music that he didn't use his iPod and its digitally compressed files at home. Instead, he used a physical format well-known to have better sound.

"Steve Jobs was a pioneer of digital music. His legacy is tremendous," Young said. "But when he went home, he listened to vinyl (albums)."

Young told the "D: Dive Into Media" conference Tuesday that he spoke with Jobs about creating a format that has 20 times the fidelity of files in the most current digital formats, including MP3.

Such a format, he said, would contain 100 percent of the data of music as it is created in a studio, as opposed to 5 percent in compressed formats including Apple's AAC. Each song would be huge, and a new storage and playback device might only hold 30 albums. Each song would take about 30 minutes to download, which is fine if you leave your device on overnight, he said.



In Humble Appreciation

We, the family of the late



FRANCIS KIN WONG

Wish to express our sincerest appreciation to all our relatives, friends and neighbors for your kind expression of love, sympathy, personal assistance and support during this difficult time of sorrow.

We extend our special thanks to Andrew Akima, Emeida "Emy" P. Camacho, Jamika Reyes, Top Development Inc, Mr. Ho, Mr. Lou, Dakeyi Canton Kitchen, Ming Palace Restaurant, Xiu Hocog & family, Andy, Tan Shu Ying and Chen Jing.

We will forever be grateful and keep you in our prayers.

Thank you very much
The Family

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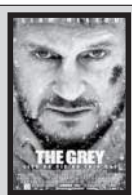
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The Grey

Friday		4:00	7:00	10:00
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00	10:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00	
Monday thru Thursday		4:00	7:00	

Liam Neeson, Frank Grillo
Adventure • Rated R

Synopsis

Liam Neeson stars in producer/director Joe Carnahan's tense adventure thriller about a group of tough-as-nails oil rig workers who must fight for their lives in the Alaskan wilderness after their airplane crashes miles from civilization. With supplies running short and hungry wolves closing in, the shaken survivors face a fate worse than death if they don't act fast.



Man On A Ledge

Friday		4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30	9:50
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30	
Monday thru Thursday		4:30	7:30	

Sam Worthington, Elizabeth Banks
Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

An NYPD hostage negotiator (Elizabeth Banks) attempts to talk cop-turned-fugitive Nick Cassidy (Sam Worthington) down from a high ledge, but she learns that he may have a hidden motive for threatening to take his own life.



One For The Money

Friday		4:20	7:20	9:35
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20	9:35
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20	
Monday thru Thursday		4:20	7:20	

Katherine Heigl, Jason O'Mara
Crime, Comedy, Thriller • Rated PG 13



Underworld: Awakening

Friday		4:25	7:25	9:40
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25	9:40
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25	
Monday thru Thursday		4:25	7:25	

Kate Beckinsale, Stephen Rea
Horror • Rated R



Red Tails

Friday		4:05	7:05	9:45
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05	9:45
Sunday	1:05	4:05	7:05	
Monday thru Thursday		4:05	7:05	

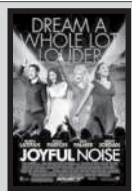
Cuba Gooding, Jr., Terrence Howard
War • Rated PG 13



Haywire

Friday		4:10	7:10	9:30
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10	9:30
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10	
Monday thru Thursday		4:10	7:10	

Gina Carano, Michael Douglas
Thriller, Spy film • Rated R



Joyful Noise

Friday		4:15	7:15	
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15	
Sunday	1:15	4:15		
Monday thru Thursday		4:15		

Queen Latifah, Dolly Parton
Comedy • Rated PG 13



Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol

Friday			9:55	
Saturday			9:55	
Sunday		7:15		
Monday thru Thursday		7:15		

Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner
Spy film, Action • Rated PG 13

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Paula Abdul exits 'X Factor'; third to leave show

By LYNN ELBER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Simon Cowell predicted "The X Factor" would be a TV hit and eclipse his ex-employer, "American Idol." He was wrong, and now his show has been gutted of three of its five stars, including Paula Abdul, putting its future in question.

Where does Fox's "X Factor" go from here in trying to replace them and compete in a crowded field of singing contests when it returns this year for season two?

Money is an issue: Aside from its talent contracts, the show's first season was expensively promoted and lavishly produced. Whether Cowell, others producers and the network will open sufficiently deep pockets when they go in search of stars to replace Abdul and Nicole Scherzinger is an open question.

Fox's favorite son, "American Idol," reportedly wooed Jennifer Lopez with \$10 million

for her first season on the show and kept her with a second-season deal worth up to \$20 million—proof of Fox's continued confidence in the show, even as it ages, to earn substantial ratings and advertising dollars. Can a rookie that stumbled out of the gate expect the same?

A new host also must be hired to replace Steve Jones, who tweeted Tuesday that his departure was "a shame" but didn't give a reason for the change.

Neither did Cowell, who in a statement Wednesday saluted Abdul on her departure and gave a "massive thank you" to her, Scherzinger of Pussycat Dolls fame and Jones for their work. Fox reality chief Mike Darnell also avoided discussing reasons for the shakeup in a "We love Paula" shout out.

But Abdul cut closer to the issue.

"I've learned through my lon-

gevity in this industry that business decisions often times override personal considerations," she said in a statement, adding that she and Cowell remained friends and she was grateful for the "X Factor" opportunity.



Abdul

The show had reunited Cowell and Abdul, former "American Idol" teammates. Abdul had quit "Idol" following a contract dispute and Cowell left to try to re-create the magic of "X Factor," a hit in Britain and elsewhere, in the U.S. market.

His bravado in promising a top-rated show that would eclipse "American Idol," which awkwardly also airs on Fox, proved overblown. Although "X Factor" gave Fox a stronger presence on Thursday, a lucrative night for advertising, it failed to match the No. 1 status of "Idol" and often lingered near the bottom of Nielsen Co.'s 20 top-rated shows—good, not great.

(Even "Idol" seems to be

suffering from singing-contest overload this season, with its ratings down by double-digit percentages. New competitors who may be diluting the genre's appeal include "The Voice," with Christina Aguilera and Adam Levine among its heavy-weight pop star judges.)

While Abdul and Scherzinger apparently failed to live up to Cowell's standards, kicking off both the show's female stars seems less than gallant. Another woman, British pop star Cheryl Cole, lost her place at the judging table in a dispute with Cowell before the show aired and was replaced by Scherzinger.

That adds to the challenge of finding replacements: Who wants to come aboard and risk taking the fall if "X Factor" doesn't improve next season?

For now, judge Antonio "L.A." Reid appears secure. And so does Cowell—until season two airs and Fox takes a hard look at whether his TV baby is growing into the blockbuster that Cowell promised.

Zoo wants company to stop using chimps in TV ads

By DON BABWIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

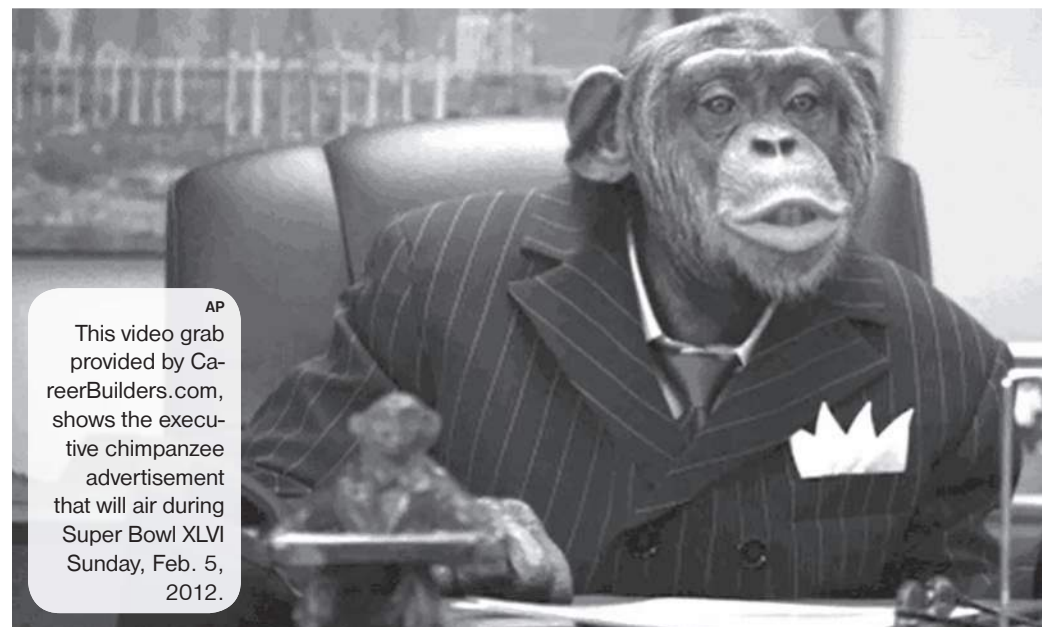
CHICAGO (AP)—A Chicago zoo is mounting a campaign to stop a company from airing a Super Bowl Sunday commercial featuring mischievous suit-and-tie wearing chimpanzees playing tricks on their human co-worker, saying all that monkey business proves deadly for the endangered species.

Lincoln Park Zoo officials fear images of the frolicking chimps broadcast worldwide do little to help conservation efforts, inaccurately portraying the animals as unthreatened and even as cuddly and harmless pets.

"If people see them that way they are less likely to try and conserve them," Dr. Steve Ross, assistant director of the zoo's Fisher Center for the Study and Conservation of Apes, said of the commercial that shows chimps laughing at a "Kick Me" sign on the human. "Individual chimps are being harmed and wild populations are being harmed by this frivolous use of an endangered species."

Ross said he and other animal welfare advocates have been complaining to CareerBuilder.com ever since the company started using chimps in Super Bowl commercials in 2005. But this year is different because he's armed with a Duke University study that he says supports his longtime claims: Commercialized chimps dressed as people—even when running up big banana daiquiri bar tabs—makes viewers less concerned about the plight of wild chimps.

"The argument they (CareerBuilder.com) make is it doesn't matter how they're portrayed, they are helping to protect them," said Dr. Brian Hare, an assistant professor of evolutionary anthropology who led the



AP
This video grab provided by CareerBuilders.com, shows the executive chimpanzee advertisement that will air during Super Bowl XLVI Sunday, Feb. 5, 2012.

study. "The opposite is true. These commercials are negatively affecting people's decisions about how they support conservation."

CareerBuilder.com declined to comment on the study or any suggestion that the commercials put wild chimpanzees in danger. But in a prepared statement, the Chicago-based company said the "chimpanzee stars" were not harmed and that the American Humane Society watched the commercial being filmed to ensure the animals were "treated with respect."

Hare is particularly concerned about how a Super Bowl commercial—shown around the world—will persuade people in Africa, some desperately poor, to capture and sell the animals.

"This advertisement teaches them there is a market for these animals, that there are some crazy people in America and Europe who would want them as pets," he said. "Even if there isn't a market, they think there's a market."

And that, he said, could devastate the wild population of chimpanzees that has already

dwindled from more than 1 million to about 100,000.

Further, he and Ross said the message that chimps make good pets is a dangerous one, as was demonstrated in 2009 when a chimpanzee attacked a Connecticut woman, ripping off her nose, lips, eyelids and hands before being shot to death by police.

Ross said he's not optimistic that CareerBuilder.com will pull the ad before this year's Super Bowl. "They already paid for this one," he said, adding that the company has never responded to any of the letters he's written them since 2005.

In fact, in an effort to drum up publicity about the ad, the company sent another email to The Associated Press trumpeting the upcoming commercial starring "CareerBuilder's beloved chimpanzees" that was back by "popular demand."

In that email, the company pointed to statistics that showed CareerBuilder.com business surged after previous Super Bowls and that its brand awareness also has grown dramatically.

But, he said in an email, maybe his concerns will find an audience

of its own that the response from "a wider segment of the public ... is negative enough for (CareerBuilder.com) not to invest more money in extending the campaign with new ads."

Ross and Hare are encouraged by another conclusion of the Duke study: The commercials may not be all that effective. Contrary to CareerBuilder.com's suggestion that the commercials helped their business, Hare said people who watched the commercials reported that they found commercials with chimpanzees less interesting than those that featured athletes, music and other things.

That is not surprising to Peter Daboll, chief executive of Ace Metrix, a firm that rates the effectiveness of ads.

"These kinds of slapsticky, kind of funny ads and these ads in particular, were relatively low scoring ads even though their likeability is high," he said.

"These (CareerBuilder.com) ads performed at the bottom of the pack of all Super Bowl ads," he said. "That's typical of what we see as pure humor, cheap laugh ads."

Sean Penn named ambassador for Haiti in ceremony

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Actor Sean Penn has been named ambassador at large for Haiti in recognition of his humanitarian work since the 2010 earthquake.

The Hollywood star received the honor from Haitian President Michel Martelly at a special ceremony Tuesday evening at the National Palace.

Martelly thanked Penn for keeping the spotlight on the Caribbean nation.

The president joked that the “only downside” to Penn’s new position is that he can no longer call the actor by his first name. Now Penn will be called “Ambassador.”

Penn’s J/P Haitian Relief Organization was set up a few months after the Jan. 12, 2010, earthquake to oversee a settlement camp where thousands of people displaced by the disaster lived.



U.S. actor Sean Penn, left, Haiti's President Michel Martelly, right, and Haiti's Foreign Minister Laurent Lamothe, center, make a toast as they pose for pictures after a special ceremony at the national palace in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012.

USA Network tackles discrimination with new ad

NEW YORK (AP)—Patrick J. Adams, star of USA Network’s legal drama, “Suits,” says he was teased when he was a teenager for being interested in theater.

“When you’re the guy doing the school plays, that’s not necessarily as cool as some of the other people,” Adams said in a recent interview. “I got bullied a ton. I got pushed around a lot.”

But things changed for Adams.

“By the end of high school, the same guy who was beating me up in the ninth grade and causing me so much strife, by the end of high school was the guy who was asking me how to write a play,” Adams said. “Now he’s my friend on Face-

book and he’s always sort of asking me questions about how he can break into the business and (for) my suggestions to become a better actor and writer.”

Adams is part of USA Network’s Characters Unite program, designed to fight intolerance.

The network has named February as its second Characters Unite Month. Stars from its prime-time shows like “Suits” and “Covert Affairs” have taped public service announcements and are interacting with the public about discrimination.

USA will air an original, one-hour documentary “NFL Characters Unite,” profiling pro football players who share their personal stories of overcoming prejudice and discrimination on Feb. 10.

“White Collar” and “Royal Pains” will each air a special episode that deals with discrimination.

Chris McCumber, co-president of USA Network, said the campaign is a passion project.

“Characters Unite is one of the most important things we do,” he said. “It has grown into this big, multiplatform effort.”



Adams

UK film outlawed for blasphemy finally unbanned

LONDON (AP)—The only movie ever banned in Britain for blasphemy was finally approved for distribution Tuesday, 23 years after it was outlawed.

The experimental short film “Visions of Ecstasy” features scenes of Jesus being seduced on the cross and became a free-speech cause celebre after Britain’s film censors refused to give it a rating, a requirement for legal distribution.

The British Board of Film Classification ruled in 1989 that a fantasy scene in which

the Spanish mystic St. Teresa of Avila sexually caresses Christ’s body could constitute blasphemous libel. The board judged that cutting out the potentially blasphemous material would shorten the 19-minute film by half, so they refused to approve it.

The movie, directed by Nigel Wingrove, became a rallying point for anti-censorship activists, and Wingrove fought the ban all the way to the European Court of Human Rights, which upheld the British decision in 1996.

Wingrove—dubbed “Britain’s answer to Hustler publisher Larry Flynt” by London’s Evening Standard newspaper—went on to found film distribution companies specializing in erotic gothic horror. He also has created artwork for the band Cradle of Filth and manages a burlesque group.

Blasphemy was abolished as an offense in 2008 and on Tuesday the film board gave Wingrove’s film an “18” rating, meaning it may be viewed by adults.

Care providers show respect by using a patient’s name

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: “She Has a Name in Georgia” (Dec. 2) complained that the care staff at the assisted living community where her mother lives calls her “Granny,” “Grandma” and “Mamma.” She found it disrespectful, and I agree with her.

I am an R.N. with two advanced nursing degrees. Calling a resident “Granny,” “Dear” or “Honey” is not loving or caring. It is degrading, humiliating and hurtful! It does not matter what the ethnicity of the attendant is; there are standards of conduct and patient’s rights. I suggest “She Has a Name” ask the director of the facility for copies of the standards of care and patient’s rights documents.

The family may want to install a “nanny cam” in the room if it will provide peace of mind. There are many fine communities where care of the residents is professionally and caringly provided. I hope they are able to find one for their mother.

Dear Abby

RETIRED R.N. AND RESIDENT ADVOCATE

DEAR R.N.: Thank you for sharing your expertise on this subject. I didn’t realize patient’s rights were specified by the documents you mentioned or that how a resident is addressed is covered in them. Other health care professionals responded similarly, and I stand corrected. My newspaper readers comment:

DEAR ABBY: During school and in clinical rotations, we were repeatedly instructed to call clients by their names, especially in situations where memory was impaired. Not only does it help to reorient the patient as to who they are and help them to maintain their identity, but it provides a clear separation as to who is family and who is the caregiver.

The director should not have diminished the importance of the family’s feelings on this matter. I suggest they consider relocating their mother to a facility that is more conscientious about the care they are being paid to provide.

CAREGIVER IN FLORIDA

DEAR ABBY: The assisted living staff should not be calling her mother by those names. The legal term is “elder speak,” or as it is commonly known—baby talk. This infantilizes elders. It is detrimental to their care and contributes to “ageism,” a process in which elders are perceived as less valuable than others.

The family was right to speak up and, regardless of cultural considerations, the staff and director should respect their wishes and refer to their mother by her appropriate name.

SHOCKED R.N. IN CALGARY, CANADA

DEAR ABBY: Failure to address a patient/resident by his or her proper name is a violation of regulations and could be cited during surveys. If the patient preferred a nickname, the care plan conference team (staff department heads, family and patient) needed to make a notation in the care plan to allow the nickname to be used.

Most of this is covered by the Patient’s Bill of Rights and falls under the “right to be treated with respect and dignity.” Using terms like “Sweetie” or “Granny” is a symptom of the staff’s failure to respect the patient’s individuality. They are objectifying and dehumanizing the person and becoming too complacent (or lazy) to learn his or her name. Besides, if an aide approached me and said, “Granny is complaining of pain,” which “Granny” am I supposed to attend to?

RESPECTFUL GERIATRIC NURSE

DEAR ABBY: In Michigan, health care professionals are expected to call patients by name. In fact, my nephew was once called into his boss’s office at the hospital and reprimanded when she overheard him say to a patient, “I’ll show you the way to the X-ray unit, Grandma.”

He was forgiven when he explained that the patient he was escorting was actually his real grandmother!

JUST CALL ME BY NAME

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

After surgery, Adele to perform at Grammys



Adele

NEW YORK (AP)—Adele is nominated for six Grammys, and she’ll be there to

collect anything she wins: The 23-year-old singer is set to perform at the awards show.

Adele had surgery on her vocal cords last year, and the Grammys will be the first time she has performed live in five months, The Recording Academy announced Tuesday.

Her sophomore album, “21,” has sold more than 6 million copies in the U.S. It is nominated for album of the year and best pop vocal album. The CD has three singles that have hit the No. 1 spot on the Billboard chart, including “Rolling in the Deep,” which is up for record and song of the year.

The Grammys are Feb. 12 in Los Angeles.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Debbie Reynolds plans new memoir ‘Unsinkable’

NEW YORK (AP)—Debbie Reynolds must have thought she’d said it all in her memoir a quarter-century ago. But now she’s got plenty more to share, including her tale of betrayal by her third husband that left the film legend divorced anew, not to mention financially bankrupt. William Morrow publishers said Tuesday that Reynolds will release her tell-all book, titled “Unsinkable,” next year. Reynolds will revisit important moments of her life as an actress during Hollywood’s Golden Age. She also will re-examine the scandalous end of her first marriage in 1959 when singer Eddie Fisher left her for their

best friend, superstar Elizabeth Taylor, said William Morrow. At 79, Reynolds continues to perform in a one-woman show and make television appearances.

Warhol exhibit to tour 5 Asian cities over 3 years

PITTSBURGH (AP)—A large retrospective exhibition of Andy Warhol’s artwork will tour five Asian cities over the next three years. The Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh says the exhibit will be the pop art icon’s largest ever in Asia. It will include more than 300 paintings, photographs, screen prints, drawings and sculptures. The exhibit, Andy Warhol: 15 Minutes Eternal, will open in Singapore in March. It will head to Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing

in 2013 and Tokyo in 2014. The tour marks the 25th anniversary of the acclaimed American artist’s death. He died at age 58 from complications following gall bladder surgery. Warhol’s work includes silk screened images of celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe and detailed renderings of Campbell’s Soup cans.

No lower-priced line for Stuart Weitzman

NEW YORK (AP)—The latest trend in fashion is to create discount collections with department stores, but don’t expect to see famed shoe designer Stuart Weitzman jumping on that bandwagon. “I’ve always focused on what I do and I’ve never tried to just do business for business

sake,” he explained in an interview Monday. Weitzman isn’t interested in following in the footsteps of brands such as Missoni (which teamed up with Target) or Versace (which partnered with H&M) to create a lower-priced collection for the masses. Prices for his line can range from \$150 to about \$500. Weitzman’s most pricey footwear was his diamond-encrusted shoes worth \$1 million. While he stopped creating that shoe in 2008, saying he did not feel right to put out such an extravagant shoe in hard economic times, he is now releasing “the millionaires” shoe. Instead of being bedazzled in diamonds, they are decorated with Swarovski crystals and priced at a little under \$600.

Pastimes

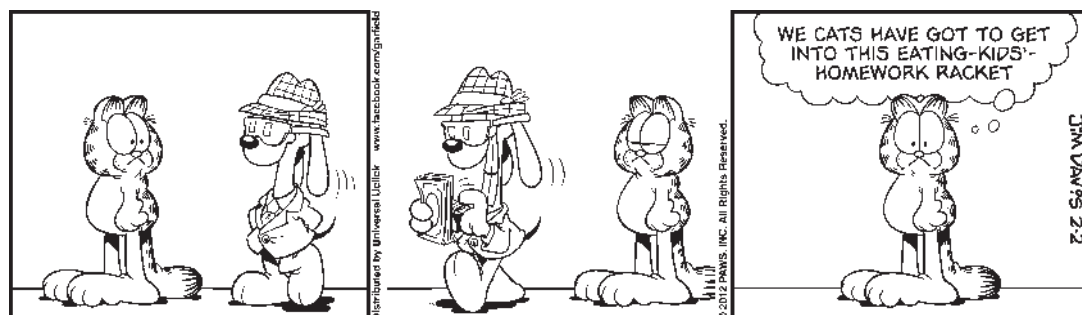
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



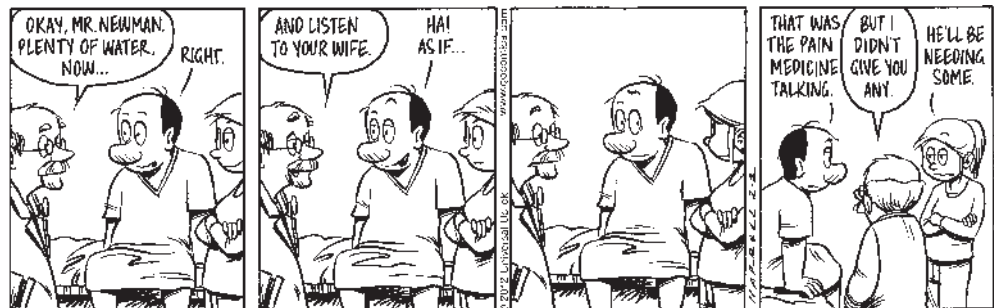
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



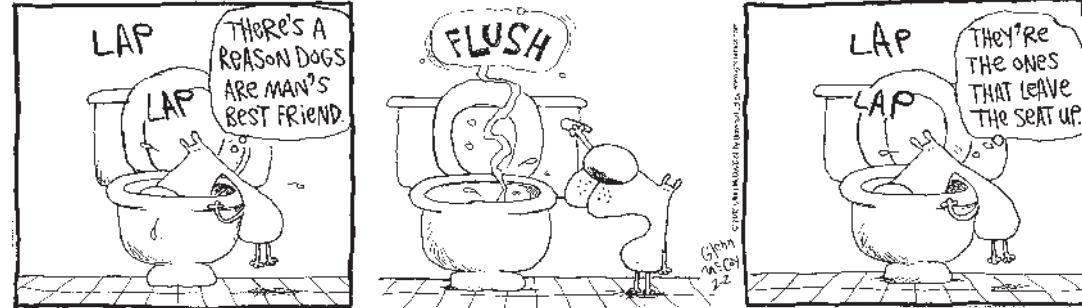
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Close
5 Sidewalk eatery
9 Eccentric
12 Volcanic outflow
13 "Caro nome" is one
14 Ultra-modernist
15 Comic's specialty
17 Right angle
18 Book after Job
19 iPhone function
21 Chance, for short
22 Hue
24 Presentation
27 Second person
28 Out of control
31 Charged bit
32 Pismire
33 Ram's mate
34 Profound
36 In medias
37 Seaport of Yemen
38 Exciting

DOWN

40 Commercial
41 Search for prey
43 Plant life treatises
47 Rowing need
48 Getting the jump on
51 USO audience
52 Trumpet
53 Chinese gang
54 Praise in verse
55 Dumb-struck
56 Remain
1 Eye layer
4 Candle fat
5 Trash containers
6 "All the Things You —"
7 Ever-green type
8 Supporter of the arts?
9 — bandit (slot machine)
10 Sandwich shop
11 Action figure, really
16 Mischievous kid
20 Kiwi's extinct cousin
22 — Island
23 Inning trio
24 Rocker Vicious
25 Weeding tool
26 Small town description
27 Play area
29 Have bills
30 Barbie's companion
35 Parishioner's seat
37 Takes as one's own
39 Island greeting
40 Matter-horn, for one
41 Comic strip possum
42 Incursion
43 Money supply
44 Laugh-a-minute
45 "— Karenina"
46 Like custard or quiche
49 Present
50 Before

Solution time: 25 mins.

P	U	P	A	S	A	W	A	R	A	M
I	R	I	S	G	I	A	P	E	R	U
E	G	G	H	E	A	D	S	O	D	E
R	F	S	F	I	L	P	A	S	H	A
R	S	U	P	S	I	T	E			
A	D	A	L	E	O	L	L	A	M	A
S	N	I	P	D	A	M	E	D	A	M
P	A	R	I	S	K	I	M	S	O	P
S	I	E	N	N	A	A	N	E	M	I
A	C	A	I	J	A	R	H	E	A	D
R	O	D	S	I	C	E	K	Y	L	E
I	N	S	T	V	E	T	S	O	Y	A

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shakira, 35; Christie Brinkley, 58; Brent Spiner, 63; Graham Nash, 70.

Happy Birthday: Get your house in order. Make a move or tidy up unfinished personal and financial business. It's up to you to take the initiative. Greater stability will be yours if you strategize and work hard to reach your goals. Your innovative plans will make you a forerunner in your circle of friends. Your numbers are 9, 13, 25, 27, 31, 37, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Contact someone from your past. Calling in a favor will make something you want to achieve much easier. Don't give in to anyone asking for too much or putting demands on you. Call the shots and you'll get things done. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Beware of empty promises and people trying to get something for nothing. You are best to take care of personal matters quietly to avoid meddlers. Use your head and you'll come up with a way to get around someone causing you grief. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Remain calm and focused. Good fortune can be yours if you play to win and set your sights on realistic goals. Don't let anyone cause unwarranted uncertainty. Size up your situation and make your move. Don't waffle under pressure. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Hidden matters must be kept that way. Prematurely revealing what you are trying to accomplish will lead to unfortunate circumstances and added responsibilities. Challenge anyone trying to shake your confidence. Protect your property and plans. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your charm and bravado will light up any group you join. Your ability to network and pull people together will be rewarded with offers that allow you to make some long overdue alterations to your life and your future. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Open-mindedness will lead to opportunity. You will learn quickly and excel. Mixing business with pleasure and mingling with people who share your concerns will bring about a new direction that will help subsidize your lifestyle. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Strive to gain as much experience as possible. Learning more about different cultures or trying something that will help you better understand your relationships will enrich your life and influence your future choices. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Your efforts won't be wasted if you focus on contracts and monies owed. Address situations that you have been avoiding and you will receive the benefits you deserve. Do what's best for you, not everyone else. It's your turn to profit. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your emotions may get the better of you. Try not to react too quickly when it comes to personal or partnership problems. Take a wait-and-see approach and gauge what's actually at the root of any conflict you face. ★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Empty promises can be expected. Before you agree to any offer or suggestion being made, look at the facts and figures carefully. You are likely to discover a flaw that may not be fixable. Your scrutiny can be a lifesaver. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Time spent at home or fixing up your digs will pay off. Working on something that can bring in extra cash or allow you greater personal freedom is looking good. Express your concerns and plans and you will get the support you need. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Not everyone will be honest with you regarding what he or she can contribute. Do your due diligence and find out firsthand how capable the people are around you before you make a commitment. Put greater effort into an important partnership. ★★

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, witty and disciplined. You are trendy, engaging and entertaining. Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		4		6						
	7							4		
6		9	8		4		2			
		1		3		9				
3									4	
		8		7		1				
	5		1		3	7		8		
		6						1		
				9		5				

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	4	8	3	5	2	1	9	7
2	5	1	7	6	9	3	8	4
9	7	3	4	8	1	6	5	2
8	6	7	2	9	5	4	1	3
4	9	2	1	7	3	5	6	8
3	1	5	8	4	6	2	7	9
5	2	6	9	3	7	8	4	1
7	3	4	6	1	8	9	2	5
1	8	9	5	2	4	7	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

2/02

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STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5951 99c per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

"WAR HORSE"

Solution: 7 letters

T	C	U	M	B	E	R	B	A	T	C	H	E	T	T
N	H	A	D	V	E	N	T	U	R	E	I	J	C	C
T	A	O	V	R	Y	D	I	V	A	D	E	E	I	A
S	R	R	R	A	E	L	M	M	R	R	T	P	D	P
D	L	E	R	O	L	T	I	O	E	O	E	H	E	T
E	I	E	B	A	U	R	E	M	R	D	E	N	A	
V	E	S	I	L	C	G	Y	P	E	P	A	A	E	I
O	R	R	J	N	A	O	H	E	E	M	U	L	B	N
N	R	O	H	T	P	O	T	B	O	U	O	R	S	S
O	T	H	E	W	L	I	S	T	R	J	D	U	G	N
S	L	D	D	I	G	R	E	B	L	E	I	P	S	O
T	O	L	D	L	T	O	B	Y	T	L	D	F	R	Y
A	C	O	I	D	R	T	N	R	O	S	E	I	E	L
W	Y	S	E	I	M	R	A	V	E	N	I	V	R	I
N	O	I	S	S	A	P	E	M	I	C	H	A	E	L

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2/2

Adventure, Albert, Armies, Benedict, Captain, Cavalry, Charlier, Colt, Cumberbatch, David, Devon, Eddie, Emily, Epic, Fry, Geordie, Heal, Hope, Horse, Irvine, Jeremy, Joey, Jump, Love, Lyons, Matt, Medals, Michael, Mopurgo, Narracott, Niels, Parted, Passion, Peter, Protect, Rider, Rose, Sold, Spielberg, Thewlis, Thoroughbred, Toby, Topthorn, Watson, Wild
Yesterday's Answer: Monster

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Lakers dominate Bobcats in 106-73 win



LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored 24 points, Andrew Bynum added 20, and the Los Angeles Lakers beat slumping Charlotte 106-73 Tuesday night, extending their home record to 11-2 and sending the Bobcats to their ninth consecutive defeat and 19th of the season.

Bynum had 11 rebounds, while Pau Gasol had 10 points and Andrew Goudelock keyed a big night for the bench with 12 points in the Lakers' last home game before beginning their annual Grammy trip on Friday at Denver. The Lakers' reserves outscored the Bobcats 48-30.

It was the Lakers' biggest victory against the Bobcats, who had beaten Los Angeles in eight of their previous 11 meetings.

Gerald Henderson scored 14 points in his return after a two-game absence because of a lower back contusion for the Bobcats, who fell to 1-11 on the road and 3-19 overall. Derrick Brown added 12 points and Kemba Walker 12 coming off his triple-double against Washington on Saturday. Boris Diaw added 11.

The Bobcats were well-rested, not having played since that three-point loss, but that didn't help the league's worst team.

The rout was well under way in the first quarter, when Bryant racked up 18 points in 10 1/2 minutes and the Lakers led 30-18. He had six more points in the second quarter and the Lakers went into halftime ahead, 60-36.

Bryant helped turn a five-point lead into 20 points in a 26-11 spurt over the end of the first quarter and start of the second with eight points, while Goudelock added seven and Bynum six. The Bobcats actually outscored Los Angeles in the third, 22-13, as Bryant went scoreless, but they still trailed 73-58.

With Bryant on the bench in the fourth, soon joined by Bynum, the Lakers' reserves put on a 3-point shooting clinic. They reeled off seven consecutive treys to push their lead to 98-70. Troy Murphy had hit three 3s, Jason Kapono chipped in two, and Goudelock and Barnes had one each. Murphy finished with 12 points and Barnes 10.

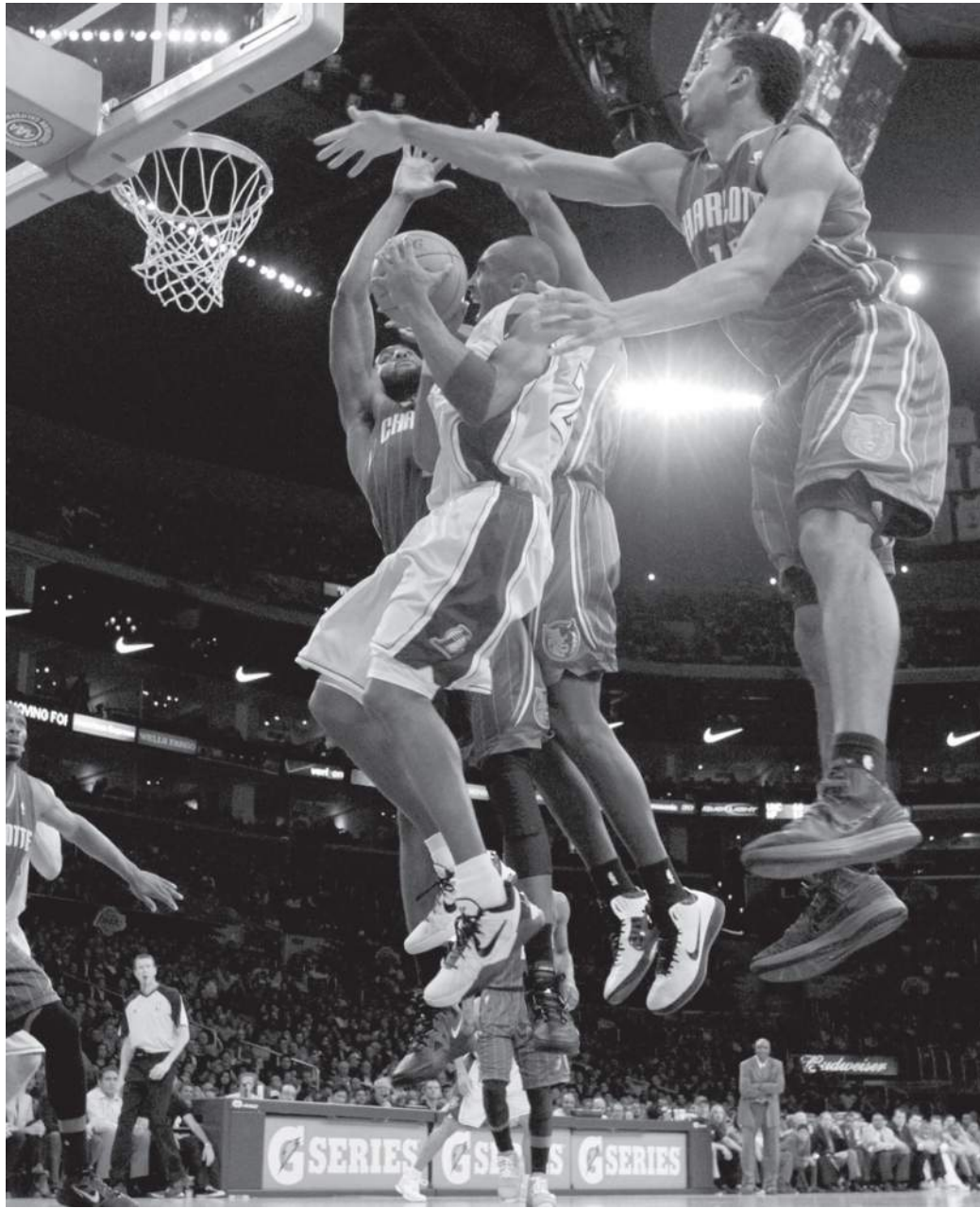
Metta World Peace got his second straight start in place of Barnes, but he wasn't a factor with two points, two rebounds, two assists and four fouls in 23 minutes.

Hawks 100, Raptors 77

In Toronto, Atlanta's Joe Johnson needed just three quarters to match his season high with 30 points as the Hawks recorded their sixth straight win over the Toronto Raptors.

Johnson matched his average of 30 points in each of his past four games against Toronto, while Tracy McGrady added 15 for the Hawks.

Jerryd Bayless scored 14 points



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant goes to the basket past Charlotte Bobcats guard Gerald Henderson, right, during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012.

for the Raptors, who lost their third in a row at home game. Toronto has done better on the road this season than at home, where it has a 2-6 record.

Pacers 106, Nets 99

In Indianapolis, Paul George scored a career-high 24 points to lead Indiana past New Jersey.

Danny Granger had 21 points and seven rebounds for the Pacers, who went on a 12-0 run midway through the third quarter and eventually led by as much as 18 in the fourth.

George, who shot 8 of 11 in this one, also scored 21 points against the Nets on Jan. 2.

Deron Williams scored 34 points for the Nets, who have lost nine straight against the Pacers. New Jersey turned the ball over three times and missed three shots in Indiana's big run and shot just 40 percent overall in the third.

Celtics 93, Cavaliers 90

In Cleveland, Paul Pierce scored 20 points as Boston avenged a disappointing loss to Cleveland two days earlier by barely holding off the struggling Cavaliers.

Ray Allen had 12 in the third quarter for the Celtics, who blew an 11-point lead at home Sunday in the final four minutes, saw a 22-point lead late in the third quarter evaporate but this time they held on.

The Cavs rallied behind rookie Kyrie Irving—who finished with 21 points—and got within

two with 1:18 left.

Knicks 113, Pistons 86

In New York, Carmelo Anthony scored 25 points in his return to the lineup as New York ended a three-game losing skid by comfortably beating Detroit.

Landry Fields added 16 of his 18 in a flawless first half for the Knicks, whose slumbering offense awoke and shot 60 percent from the field—amazingly the first time they bettered 50 percent all season—and fell just a point short of matching their highest score.

Anthony had missed two games because of injuries to his ankle, wrist and thumb.

Jonas Jerebko scored 15 points for the Pistons, who lost their sixth straight.

Warriors 93, Kings 90

In Oakland, Calif., Brandon Rush scored 15 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter to spark a late rally, and the Golden State Warriors spoiled former coach Keith Smart's return with a victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Rush finished 4 for 5 from 3-point range and highlighted a 9-0 run to start the final period that carried new Warriors coach Mark Jackson past his predecessor. Jackson also sat stars Stephen Curry and Monta Ellis for almost the entire fourth quarter, riding his bench with an unconventional move.

Tyreke Evans had 22 points,

10 rebounds and nine assists and DeMarcus Cousins added 21 points and 14 rebounds in Sacramento's fifth straight loss. The Kings (6-15) are in last place in the Pacific Division, just behind Golden State (7-12).

Grizzlies 100, Nuggets 97, OT

In Memphis, Tenn., O.J. Mayo scored 18 points, including a go-ahead 3-pointer with 35 seconds left in overtime, as the Memphis Grizzlies snapped a four-game losing streak with a victory over the Denver Nuggets.

Mayo's basket gave Memphis a 98-97 lead, and two free throws by Mike Conley with 8 seconds left gave Memphis the final margin. Rudy Fernandez's potential tying 3-point attempt in the closing seconds for Denver bounced off the rim, sending the Nuggets to their second straight loss.

Rudy Gay and Marc Gasol both overcame poor shooting nights to lead Memphis with 20 points apiece, each also grabbing 13 boards as the Grizzlies outrebounded the Nuggets 48-42. Tony Allen had 17 points and four blocks, and his defensive pressure in the second half keyed a Grizzlies rally. Mike Conley finished with 11 points.

Al Harrington led Denver with 23 points, 21 after halftime, and 10 rebounds. Andre Miller had 20 points on 8 of 13 from the field. Nene scored 14 points and Ty Lawson had 12 points.

Fielder: Joining Tigers 'kind of a dream'



DETROIT (AP) — Prince Fielder was

born in 1984, the last time Detroit won the World Series.

After luring Fielder to Michigan with the fourth-largest contract in baseball history, the Tigers are hoping he will help usher in a new championship era for the Motor City.

"This is awesome," Fielder said Thursday after finalizing a \$214 million, nine-year deal with Detroit. "It's kind of a dream come true. I'm excited."

Detroit began seriously pursuing Fielder after designated hitter Victor Martinez tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee during offseason conditioning. Now the Tigers have three of baseball's biggest stars—Fielder, Miguel Cabrera and Justin Verlander—all in their primes. Detroit won the AL Central by 15 games last year but lost to Texas in the AL championship series.

When the Tigers introduced Fielder on Thursday, the message was clear:

"We're trying to win right now," general manager Dave Dombrowski said. "We tried to win last year. We were close. I think we've reached a point now, on a yearly basis, we feel that way. When you look at the core of our group of players, there's a lot of guys that are on that field right now that are quality players."

Fielder's father Cecil became a big league star when he returned to the majors from Japan and hit 51 home runs with Detroit in 1990. Cecil played with the Tigers into the 1996 season, and young Prince made a name for himself with his prodigious power displays during batting practice at Tiger Stadium.

Detroit plays at Comerica Park now, and times have changed. The Fielders' strained relationship has been well documented, and Prince didn't elaborate on it Thursday.

"I'm just ecstatic about being with the Tigers," Prince Fielder said. "I'm just here to enjoy the day."

It will be up to manager Jim Leyland to figure out where to play all of his powerful hitters. He said Thursday the Tigers will move Miguel Cabrera from first base to third to make room for Fielder. He also listed a possible batting order, with Cabrera hitting third and Fielder fourth.

It's a lineup based on power, not speed.

"If they hit it where they're supposed to hit 'em, they can trot," Leyland said. "We're going back to the old-fashioned baseball. We've got big-time power on the corners."

Fielder's contract includes a limited no-trade provision. He can be traded to 10 clubs without his consent before 2017, when he gains rights to block

all trades under baseball's labor contract as a 10-year veteran who has been with a team for at least five years.

He will earn \$23 million in each of his first two years with Detroit, then will make \$24 million annually in the final seven seasons of his contract, according to terms obtained by The Associated Press.

The move carries plenty of risk for the Tigers. Fielder is 27 and has been extremely durable during his career, but Detroit is committing to him for almost a decade.

"I go by my instinct, like everybody else does," said owner Mike Ilitch, the Little Caesars pizza mogul who signed off on this massive deal after what had been a quiet offseason for the Tigers. "My instincts told me that this is going to work out fine."

Leyland sounded as taken aback as anyone with his club's sudden change.

"This boggles my mind, to be honest with you," he said. "I was kidding somebody. I said—I'm being funny—About three weeks ago we were talking about maybe getting an extra pitcher or bullpen guy or something. Well, we didn't know if we had the finances to get a guy." I said, "I don't know what happened in three weeks. Little Caesars did good, evidently."

The hardest adjustment might be for Cabrera. He's returning to a position he played while with the Florida Marlins, but he's played only 14 games at third base with the Tigers—all in 2008 right after he joined the team.

Fielder made 15 errors last year, the most in baseball by a first baseman.

"Mr. Ilitch and Dave have given me a lot of nice pieces to this puzzle. It's my job, along with coaches, to figure out how to put that puzzle all together," Leyland said. "(Cabrera) is not going to have the agility, most likely, defensively that Brandon Inge had. You give up a little something, but you get a whole lot in return."

Leyland said he talked to Inge, who lost his job as Detroit's everyday third baseman last season.

"He's not the happiest camper," Leyland said. "He certainly understands."

Dombrowski indicated he's satisfied with his roster heading into spring training, although it's hard to rule out any more moves after the Tigers shockingly emerged with Fielder.

The pitching rotation is anchored by Verlander, who won the Cy Young Award and MVP last year, but Detroit's fifth starter spot is still uncertain. Dombrowski said the Tigers could bring in some non-roster invites to compete for that job.

"I think positional player-wise, we're pretty well set," he said.

At Super Bowl media day, wacky questions the norm



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Quick, Wes Welker, spell Bill Belichick. Hey, Osi Umenyiora, know any other Elis besides that Manning guy? Rob Gronkowski, what's your favorite song by Madonna?

Not exactly challenging questions about Sunday's Super Bowl between the New York Giants and New England Patriots. But that's media day, the NFL's annual version of the circus, minus the ringmaster.

With players and coaches penned into cubicles, mainstream reporters were joined Tuesday by a guy in a superhero costume, another in an old-time football uniform, kids with microphones and some women who wore dresses that left little to the imagination. They asked the Patriots and Giants anything that crossed their minds.

And we do mean anything.

"This is crazy, man. It's crazy," said Patriots safety Patrick Chung. "I've never seen anything like this ever."

Actually, none of the players had. For the first time, the NFL let fans in on the act, too. For \$25—or more, for those who waited until the last minute to buy their tickets—fans could sit in the stands at the stadium and listen to the interviews over a headset.

"We can't hear all of the questions, so we have to guess," said Lee Clifford, who brought his sons, 10-year-old Ben and 8-year-old Nick. "I guess lots of people can get a pass to a media event."

Even people who carry their own disco ball, as the camera crew from Telemundo did.

Media day has never been the stuff of Woodward and Bernstein.

But it's gone from off-the-wall to downright goofy in recent years, the tipping point coming four years ago when a reporter from Mexico's TV Azteca showed up in a wedding dress from a slasher movie in hopes of winning Tom Brady's heart.

Imagine asking Vince Lombardi if he could name three Kardashians. Gronkowski actually did pretty well—he got Kim and Khloe right away, but needed a few more seconds to come up with Kourtney. Or getting John Elway to salsa dance, as New York Giants receiver Victor Cruz did with singer Ciara.

There were no brides or proposals for Brady this year, although the fashion-conscious QB did talk about having his nails painted.

"They were pretty easy on me," Brady said



Michael Hoyson is seen outside Lucas Oil Stadium before NFL football's Super Bowl XLVI Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2012, in Indianapolis.

AP

when asked what it was like to grow up with three older sisters. "They dressed me up a few times in their clothes and painted my nails once, but it was nice."

Most of the players were good sports about the whole thing, knowing what they were in for when they arrived at Lucas Oil Stadium. Even the normally dour Belichick managed a chuckle or two.

"It's kind of catching me off guard," Patriots cornerback Sterling Moore said. "I definitely thought he'd be a little more strict in his interviews."

He might have been a little more cranky if he'd heard Welker when the receiver was asked if he knew how to spell Belichick's last name.

"Tough one. B-E-L-I-C-H-I," Welker said, and then paused. "K. Wait, that right? Is it CK?"

Told Belichick's name ended in "CK," Welker smacked his head.

Umenyiora fared better with the other Elis,

naming Plaxico Burress' little boy, Elijah. As for Gronkowski and Madonna, he wasn't crazy for that question.

Silly stuff, to be sure. But the fans loved every minute of it. Parents let their kids skip school—Zane Bishop, a high school senior, had his head buried in a book during the break, cramming for his AP Government exam Wednesday—and the tickets were in such high demand people were actually scalping them.

"It's such an intimate experience," said Nick Lowery, a Patriots fan who drove from Columbia, Mo. "This is really cool."

Unlike the NFL draft, when rowdy New Yorkers waste no opportunity to heckle picks and boo players, the fans were on their best behavior. Most in the crowd of 7,300 were Colts fans, with many sporting Peyton Manning's No. 18 jersey. But the fans greeted both teams with applause when they came in, and cheered when Eli Manning, Brady and Welker talked about

how much they were enjoying Indianapolis and praised Colts fans.

They even set aside their hatred for the Patriots, the Colts' biggest rival.

"Our philosophy has been 'Fans first.' It's all about Hoosier hospitality," said Toni Meyer of Indianapolis.

Added Bill Burns, "The Patriots, we really don't like 'em here. But there hasn't been any animosity."

The only complaint was that fans wanted more. Though they could hear interviews with the head coach and four players on the headset, they were restricted to the stands. No autographs, no photographs with their favorite players.

"I kind of wish we'd been on the field, but I understand," said Burns, who wore a hat with a "Press" card on the side and carried a toy purple microphone. "It probably would have been a bit of a madhouse."

Too late. It passed that threshold years ago.

Peyton casts large shadow over Super Bowl



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—For a Manning who isn't in the Super Bowl, this one sure is making headlines.

It happened again Tuesday, when Colts quarterback Peyton Manning denied whispers that he was pondering retirement.

"I have no plans on doing that," he said.

It's the strongest indication that, despite having his third neck operation in September, he hopes to play in the NFL when the new season kicks off later this year—something the league is happy about.

"My plan hasn't changed," he said. "I'm on track with what the doctors have told me to do, and I'm doing that. I'm rehabbing hard."

The NFL would prefer to keep the focus on this week's juiciest story lines—Giants quarterback Eli Manning trying to outdo his older brother by winning a second Super Bowl; Patriots quarterback Tom Brady and coach Bill Belichick chasing their fourth titles and maybe exacting a little revenge for their loss to New York four years ago.

But as everyone knows, this is Peyton's place, his town, and fans hang on every detail of his recovery.

"It's not the way it should be," he said earlier Tuesday in a taped interview with ESPN.

The Colts ended their most tumultuous month in more than a decade with another flurry of moves.

Team officials confirmed Tuesday that they had hired Bruce Arians, Manning's former quarterbacks coach, as offensive coordinator, and Harold Goodwin as offensive line coach. They also fired tight ends coach Ricky Thomas and assistant offensive line coach Ron Prince.

The whirlwind of changes began Jan. 2, the day after the Colts clinched the No. 1 overall draft pick with a league-worst 2-14 record. Irsay has since fired vice chairman Bill Polian, general manager Chris Polian, and dismissed coach Jim Caldwell and most of his staff—a series of changes that prompted Peyton Manning to voice his complaints two days after the conference championship games.

Two days later, Irsay called Manning a "poli-

tician," fueling a public spat that drew national attention. The two tried to put out that fire before the team's scheduled arrivals, but the fallout has continued into this week.

"I would think he's very uncomfortable, especially with the Giants here and Eli," former Colts coach Tony Dungy said. "When you get to a Super Bowl, even though it's the second (recent) one for the Giants, you want the focus to be on that achievement. He would much rather have the focus on Eli and what they've done to get here, and unfortunately, that's not going to happen."

If there were any doubts, they were answered in a strange 24-hour period that began with the host committee's news conference Monday.

Irsay joined the mayor, governor and two committee officials to discuss game-week preparations, but wound up taking most of the questions, nearly all of which focused on Manning's future. Afterward, Irsay said he didn't plan to discuss the Manning situation again this week.

On Tuesday, Manning piped in.

Shortly after the NFL's annual Super Bowl

media day event ended, Peyton Manning met with a small group of reporters with the idea of turning the attention back to Sunday's game.

That didn't work too well, either.

"I'm working hard, I had a really good session today," Manning said after repeatedly being asked about his rehab. "I continue to make progress and work hard. The doctors are encouraged and that's encouraging to me."

The four-time league MVP hasn't played in more than a year because of a damaged nerve that caused weakness in his throwing arm. He had neck surgery in May, then underwent his third and most invasive neck surgery in 19 months in September. Doctors fused two vertebrae together, a procedure that forced him to miss the Colts two-win season.

Since then, there has been rampant speculation about his recovery, the potential risks of a return, whether the Colts will pay Manning a \$28 million roster bonus in early March to prevent him from becoming a free agent or whether the soon-to-be 36-year-old might retire.

"My plan hasn't changed," Manning said. "I'm on track with what the doctors have told me to do, and I'm doing that. I'm rehabbing hard."

GCA bumps off MHS1 in girls volleyball

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Grace Christian Academy's Lady Eagles moved into second place in the standings with a big win over Marianas High School as the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization's girls volleyball season continued at the MHS Gymnasium.

In addition, Marianas Baptist Academy is riding high on its second straight win, while defending champion Saipan International School Lady Geckos remains in first place and improved its unbeaten streak to seven with a sound sweep of its junior varsity counterparts.

MHS' Junior Dolphins (MHS2) received a forfeit victory over still absent Saipan Southern High School (0-7). However, the latter is expected to take the floor for the very first time today. MHS2 has just two wins with five losses on its card.

GCA came out swinging in the tiebreaker and took the first set, 25-16, and held strong in the second pairing, 25-18, for the nod. The MHS1 Lady



Grace Christian Academy's Michi Tenorio, seen here in a file photo, leaps up for a spike in an earlier MISO matchup against the Kagman High School at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Dolphins managed to take the third set, 15-9, but were knocked down into the third spot after absorbing its second loss in seven games.

Notably, GCA settled for third place behind MHS1 last year, but now sits alone in second place with six wins and loss on its card.

Meanwhile, MBA liked the taste of last week's win so much they kept it rolling with nice

sweep over KHS, 25-16, 25-16, and 15-11.

MBA started the season slow, but have really shown improved signs of gelling together as a group. The two squads now share identical records with three wins with four losses.

Finally, it was just another day at the office for SIS1 as they had little trouble surpassing its junior varsity crew in all three

sets, 25-12, 25-17 and 15-6.

SIS1 is the lone undefeated team with seven wins, while SIS 2 fell to a 3-4 slate.

The season continues at 4pm with MHS1 tipping off against MBA on the north court with GCA facing KHS on the south end. Then at 5pm SIS2 hosts MHS2 on the north square with SSHA debuting against SIS1 in a home draw on the south side.

WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND

Newcomer Kim keeps RGA January Ace

By ROSELYN B. MONROY
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REPORTER



Refaluwasch Golf Association's newest member Kim Soo retained the RGA January

Ace title after his net score in the qualifier went unbeaten in last Sunday's tournament at the Marianas Country Club.

Kim carded a net 70 in the RGA January Ace qualifier and Tars Olopai fell two strokes short of surpassing the former's score. Olopai, a 9-handicapper, shot 40s on the front and back nines to top last Sunday's tournament, but his net 71 was not enough to allow him to grab the January plum from Kim.

The new RGA member also joined last weekend's competition and tallied a net 73 for third place. The 7-handicapper Kim posted a 41 in the first nine holes and nailed a 39 in the last nine for a gross 80. He defeated Jordan Kosam in the scorecards tiebreak, as Kim had a net 36.5 on the front nine against the latter's 39. Kosam, who sported a 16 handicap, made a 47 and 42 on the front and back nines for a gross 89.

Rounding out the Top 3 of last weekend's tournament was RGA veteran Jess Wabol, who logged a net 72. The 7-handicapper Wabol was a bit flat in his first tournament of the sea-

son, scoring a 41 on the front nine, but played better on the back with a 38 for a gross 79. Wabol also won the closest to the pin shot on hole No. 12, while Ulysis Kapileo prevailed on hole No. 6.

Last Sunday's RGA January Ace tournament drew 18 players. The list includes (with their net scores) Woo (76), Ahn (74), Tom Tebuteb (80), Ray Tigilau (75), S. Fong (86), Frankie Pangelinan (82), Kapilero (74), Nick Guerrero (75), Joe Saures (78), Tony Camacho (82), Manny Mangarero (78), Joe Wabol (82), Choi (76), and J. Fong (102).

The club then held a potluck banquet after the competition at Camacho's residence in Tanapag.

"We would like to thank Tony Camacho and family for hosting us and also Pacific Trading, Co. for their donation," RGA official Jess Wabol said.

Wabol added that the club will be holding the February qualifier on Feb. 12 at the Kingfisher Golf Links. Then on Feb. 19, another tournament will take place at the Talafofo course with the February Ace at stake.

RGA is still accepting members for an annual fee of only \$25. For more information, contact Saures at 483-5508, Wabol at 288-1119, and treasurer/handicap director Sonny Flores at 234-1748.

VANLANDINGHAM

From Page 28

The Colorado native tore the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) of her left knee late August last year and underwent surgery. Vanlandingham sustained the injury while on a training run. Because of the injury, she missed the 2011 XTERRA World Championship in Hawaii where she won in 2010 for the first time.

About six months before she snapped her knee last year,

Vanlandingham was on Saipan and ended Renata Bucher's seven-year reign in the annual off-road triathlon race. The U.S. pro timed in at 3:01:09 to become the first woman finisher in last year's XTERRA Saipan, more than five minutes ahead of runner-up and XTERRA Saipan newcomer Carina Wasle of Austria (3:01:09). Bucher slid to third after clocking in at 3:06:33.

Both Wasle and Bucher are coming back on Saipan this year, according to Wolf Mojica, president of the organizing

Taga Inc. The XTERRA Saipan Championship is scheduled for March 24.

Joining the two women's pro is Jacqui Slack of the United Kingdom. The British triathlete has been in the sport for seven years and has been competing as a pro for three years. She participated in the ITU World Sprint Championships, British Elite Series, Strathclyde European Cup, ITU World Cross Triathlon Championships, and the National Cross Championships.

With the absence of Vanland-

ingham, Slack, Wasle, Bucher, and home bet Miekko Carey are expected to slug it out for the women's division title.

In the men's division, former champion Olivier Marceau is likely to return to challenge fellow pros Denison Freitas of Brazil and Cedric Lassonde, Ben Allen, and Graham Wadsworth of U.K. The four British triathletes were referred by three-time XTERRA Saipan champion Sam Gardner, who will be missing this year's event to attend to his pregnant wife.

more than six minutes ahead of Kabiriel, who clocked in at 56:45, which was still faster than the latter's 2010 winning time of 1:00:26.

According to Villafria, he, Kabiriel, and eventual third placer Tom Linden (58:48) had a close race until the former broke away near the Lower Base road.

In the women's division, Akane Imaya defended her title after beating Wantha Aldrich and Cui Xiangshan. Imaya timed in at 1:13:42, eclipsing her 2010 winning time (1:20:55), while Aldrich and Cui logged 1:21:17 and 1:23:32, respectively.

Goto Taro (2:23:34), Shogo (2:24:45) and Miwa (2:28:17) Hyakutake, Uasushi Shimizu (2:29:57), Pete Vilaga (2:33:28), Tamio Nishikido (2:33:48), Andrew Johnson (2:51:41), Kaisei Toda (2:51:41), Joshua Berger (2:52:01), Roxie Lamar (2:52:01), Magie Lyn Vicente (3:00:07), Ben Babauta (3:07:50), Mahesh Balakrishna (3:07:50), and Hitoshi Yamaguchi (3:10:11).

Upset in 10K

In the short 10K event, Ronald Villafria dethroned 2010 champion Ketson "Jack" Kabiriel.

Villafria timed in at 50:03,

veteran finished second behind Oshima-Berger after timing in at 1:56:07. Allen Terra rounded out the Top 3 in the women's long course, clocking in at 2:13:11.

In the men's division, Florence Antonio and John Douglas joined the debuting Epperson in the Top 3. Antonio cut the tape at the 1:55:29 mark, while Douglas submitted a 2:05:29.

Other finishers in the long course were Patrick Demapan (2:09:45), Danny Garcia (2:20:07), Jose Quan (2:11:20), Surya Pipit (2:13:12), Natasha Kuckuck (2:13:20), Dawn Hammermeister (2:23:33),

Aim Low will play in Game 1 of the best-of-five title series on Monday.

The Teachers hope to join Aim Low in the finals when they go for a sweep against Roc It today. The Teachers topped Game 1 of the other semis series last Tuesday, 29-16. Roc It drew first blood in Game 1 with a 13-5 win in the opening set, but the Teachers recovered big time in the last two sets, 12-3,

12-0, to steal the series opener. Roc It aims to take Game 2 to force a deciding Game 3 that will be played tomorrow.

Roc It, the Teachers, Aim Low, and Just-Do-It made it to the Final Four after completing their second round games last week. Aim Low and the Teachers tied for first place with a 4-1 record, but the former gained the No. 1 spot due to the winner over the other rule. Aim Low also outscored

the Teachers in the second round, 189-183. Roc It came in at third with a 3-2 record, while Just-Do-It clinched the last semis ticket with its 2-3 record. Give-a-Hoot and Alpha Q were eliminated.

After the second round, Aim Low collected the most heavy hitting points with 307 and goals (15). The Teachers earned 254 heavy hitting points, while Roc It, and Just-Do-It tallied 241 and 194, respectively.

THREE

From Page 28

dogs, but decided not to at the last minute when I found out there will be some dogs along the course. I don't want to get in trouble," added Oshima-Berger, who was with her dog when she did the same race in 2009 and finished 30th overall.

Despite the absence of her pets, Oshima-Berger, who debuted in the Coffee Trail in 2008 and finished fourth, still had a running buddy in the weekend event in Miekko Carey. The XTERRA World

AIM

From Page 28

ning margin in the first set, 13-5, and then padded its lead to 17 after the second set, following another victory, 12-3. In the third set, Just-Do-It tried to push the game in overtime, but fell short, as Aim Low won by two, 14-12, for another juiced-out triumph, 39-20.

MHS

From Page 28

teach the students some fundamental skills and training drills.

The Chelsea Football Club Soccer School is a campus in Hong Kong that serves as a satellite school from the Chelsea Football Club based in Fulham, West London in England.

The Hong Kong branch stared

in 2005 by former soccer pro Leslie George Santos as Santos Soccer Training Limited Hong Kong.

Santos played out a fruitful career in Hong Kong and started the training program upon retirement.

He and his coaching staff underwent an intensive training and coaching education program at the ChelseaFC in England; over 10 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) qualified head and assistant coaches op-

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Philadelphia	15	6	.714	—
Boston	10	10	.500	4 1/2
New York	8	13	.381	7
New Jersey	7	15	.318	8 1/2
Toronto	7	15	.318	8 1/2

Southeast Division

Miami	16	5	.762	—
Atlanta	16	6	.727	1/2
Orlando	12	9	.571	4
Washington	4	17	.190	12
Charlotte	3	19	.136	13 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	18	5	.783	—
Indiana	14	6	.700	2 1/2
Milwaukee	9	11	.450	7 1/2
Cleveland	8	12	.400	8 1/2
Detroit	4	19	.174	14

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	14	8	.636	—
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San Antonio	13	9	.591	1
Houston	12	9	.571	1 1/2
Memphis	11	10	.524	2 1/2
New Orleans	4	17	.190	9 1/2

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	16	4	.800	—
Denver	14	7	.667	2 1/2
Utah	12	7	.632	3 1/2
Portland	12	9	.571	4 1/2
Minnesota	10	11	.476	6 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Clippers	12	6	.667	—
L.A. Lakers	13	9	.591	1
Golden State	7	12	.368	5 1/2
Phoenix	7	13	.350	6
Sacramento	6	15	.286	7 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Boston 93, Cleveland 90
Indiana 106, New Jersey 99
Atlanta 100, Toronto 77
New York 113, Detroit 86
Memphis 100, Denver 97, OT
Golden State 93, Sacramento 90
L.A. Lakers 106, Charlotte 73

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Inaugural San Vicente Church Bike Race



Bikers line up at the starting line for last Saturday's Inaugural San Vicente Church Bike Race.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Riders head out to the course.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The Top 3 placers in the men's road bike, from left, runner-up Aldrin Sta. Ana, winner Nap Dizon, and third placer Rene Calage.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
From left, front row, sports course third placer Ricky Suba, champion Ronald Lanuza, and Bernard Laborce, are joined by race co-organizer Vince Seman of Mount Tapochau Bike Club.



Bikers wait for the start of the race in front of San Vicente Church.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Champion course women's division winner Susan Marchitti, third left, poses with, from left, Jay Santos and Vince Seman of Mount Tapochau Bike Club and Father Rey Rosal, Parish Priest of the San Vicente Church, during the awards ceremony for last Saturday's 1st Annual San Vicente Church Bike Race.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Youth biker Erico Castro, third left, made it to the Top 3 in the MTB championship course U14 division despite a flat tire.



Above, bikers are a few meters away from the finish line.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Far left, women's road bike co-winners, Rima Yamagishi, Sherly Camacho, Juanita Fajardo, and Esther Ada pose for a photo after receiving their prizes.

Left, Father Rey Rosal, right, Parish Priest of the San Vicente Church, poses with race volunteers.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



**Peyton
casts large
shadow over
Super Bowl**

24

Saipan Tribune Sports

28 THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2012

**Lakers dominate
Bobcats in
106-73 win**



24

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Vanlandingham to skip XTERRA Saipan



U.S. pro Shonny Vanlandingham, seen here pedaling up to Mt. Tapochao during last year's XTERRA Saipan Championship, decided to skip this year's off-road race.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Next month's XTERRA Saipan Championship will be missing defending women's champion Shonny Vanlandingham.

The American pro in a message to *Saipan Tribune* late last month said she decided to skip the 2012 edition of XTERRA Tour's Crown Jewel to continue her rehabilitation.

"I have had to make the tough but wise decision to



continue my rehab and training through March with no racing. The knee just isn't quite ready. I will miss you guys this year but plan to be back in 2013," Vanlandingham said.

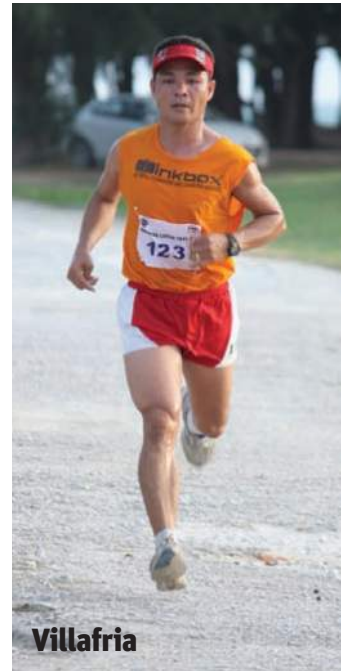
See VANLANDINGHAM on Page 4

Three in a row for Mami

»Villafria rules 10K



Oshima-Berger



Villafria

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Mamiko Oshima-Berger extended her reign in the 5th Marianas Coffee Trail Run.

Oshima-Berger, who won the third and fourth editions of the event in 2010, made it three in a row after becoming the first woman to complete last Saturday's long course race (20-kilometer) at the 1:46:38 mark.

She crossed the finish line at the American Memorial Park more than 11 minutes after overall top finisher and men's champion Charles Epperson (1:35:26).

"It was a great race, it was cold and the trails were great," said Oshima-Berger a few minutes after completing the event that brought runners to the wild coffee plantations built during the Japanese colonial era on Saipan and the young coffee groves of sponsor Marianas Coffee Co.

"I intended to run with my
See THREE on Page 26

Aim Low clinches finals seat in Rocball

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Fall League.

Aim Low swept Just-Do-It in the semifinals to notch the first finals berth in the 2011 Rocball.

Game 1 was played last Monday at the Marianas High

Aim Low swept Just-Do-It in the semifinals to notch the first finals berth in the 2011 Rocball.

School Gymnasium with Aim Low juicing out Just-Do-It, 36-30. Just-Do-It dropped the series opener despite winning the first set, 10-12. Aim Low grabbed the lead, 23-22, after a 13-10 victory in the second set and went on to complete the win after prevailing anew in the third set, 13-8.

In Game 2 yesterday, Aim Low never gave Just-Do-It a chance to force a deciding Game 3, as the former won all three sets of the match. Aim Low took an eight-point win-

See AIM on Page 26

MHS bests MHS2 in girls soccer

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER



Marianas High School's Varsity

Lady Dolphins (MHS1) shut out its sister team MHS2, 3-0, in Tuesday's Marianas Inter-scholastic Sports Organization girls soccer matchup at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

MHS1 midfielder Alodia



Marianas High School midfielder Alodia Lumasang clears the ball up field in last Thursday's MISO girls soccer match against Kagman High School at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Lumasang led the Lady Dolphins with two goals late in the first half.

Lumasang drew first blood in the 20th minute and then found the back of the net again in the 30th minute of the opening period.

MHS1 called off the dogs after the break, but MHS1's Charnessa Lizama nailed in the coffin to lift the Varsity Lady Dolphins, 3-0, with just three minutes left in the game.

MHS1 improved its flawless streak to four, while the school's junior varsity absorbed

its fourth loss thus far.

The season continues today at 4:30pm with the Saipan Southern High School Lady Manta Rays taking on the Lady Ayuyus of Kagman High School.

Both teams share win-loss-draw records of 1-1-1, and stalemated a null draw in their first meeting.

In related news, the MISO postseason double-elimination tournament is approaching and Tinian High School is

expected to turn out this year.

MISO organizers are currently working with the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association to see if they can have a representative coach from the visiting Chelsea Football Club visit Tinian.

The visiting coach can offer advice and provide game strategy to Tinian's novice coaching staff and perhaps conduct a youth clinic to

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